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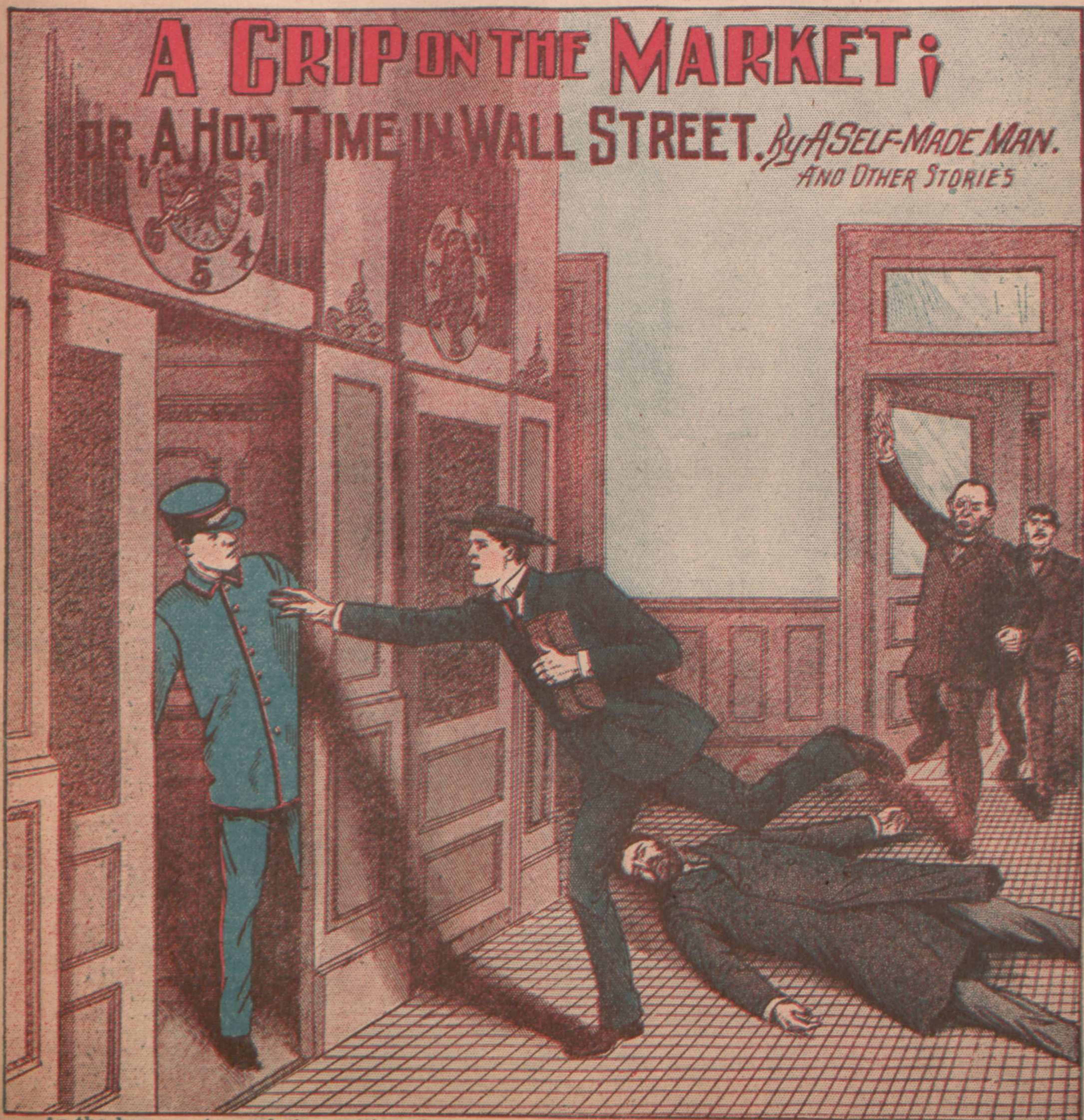
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FAME ^{AND} FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF
BOYS THAT MAKE MONEY.

A GRIP ON THE MARKET;

OR, A HOT TIME IN WALL STREET. *By A SELF-MADE MAN.*
AND OTHER STORIES



As the boy ran toward the waiting elevator, Peck, who was in advance, reaching out his arms to detain him, lost his balance and pitched forward. His head struck the corner of the elevator shaft and he rolled over insensible.

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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NEW YORK, DECEMBER 29, 1916.

Price 5 Cents.

A GRIP ON THE MARKET

—OR—

A HOT TIME IN WALL STREET

By A SELF-MADE MAN.

CHAPTER I.

DICK MERRITON IS TREATED TO A STARTLING SURPRISE.

"Hello, Bob! What's your rush?" asked Dick Merriton, messenger for John Barber, stock broker, of No. — Wall Street.

"I'm going to work. Got a job at last. Aren't you glad?" replied Bob Browning, Dick's particular friend.

"Sure thing," replied Dick, keeping pace with Bob. "What kind of a job have you got?"

"Running an elevator in the King Building."

"When did you catch on?"

"Yesterday."

"How do you like it as far as you've got?"

"All right."

"I'll see you often, then, for I carry one or more messages to Withers & Co. nearly every day."

"They're on the sixth floor front."

"Correct. Have you got to learn the name and location of every tenant in the building? I think you'll have a sweet time doing it, for there must be three or four hundred of them, easily."

"I'll learn most of them in time."

"Well, I wish you luck. Here's where I leave you," and Dick darted into the office building where he was employed and took an elevator for the third floor.

There were several customers standing around the ticker when Dick entered the office, and others seated around the reception-room waiting for their turn to see Mr. Barker.

A vinegary-looking woman entered after Dick.

She carried an umbrella and a reticule, and wore fingerless open network mitts.

She always wanted to see Mr. Barker, though Mr. Barker was never in a hurry to see her, notwithstanding that she was a steady customer.

As a matter of fact, she was something of a nuisance, for when she got an audience with the broker she prolonged her stay until Mr. Barker had to hint that there were others waiting to see him on particular business.

Dick had standing orders to sidetrack her whenever she presented herself—that is, if he could do so without insulting her.

She was a hard proposition to handle, and the boy never liked to tackle her.

She kept a boarding-house uptown, and was known to have a good bank account.

"I want to see Mr. Barker," said the lady, whose name was Beakes.

"Sorry, ma'am, but Mr. Barker is engaged," replied Dick, in his blandest tone.

"Well, I want to see him when he's disengaged," she said, compressing her thin lips and glaring at Dick as if he were a boarder who was in arrears.

"That will be in about two hours, ma'am, if he doesn't have to attend a directors' meeting."

"Seems to me he's always attending directors' meetings," she said, sharply.

"Yes, ma'am. Take a seat, please. Your turn will come panies."

"But it's his business to look after his customers as well as his companies."

"So he does, ma'am," replied Dick, politely.

"He's always busy when I call. I can't see him half the time."

"You're not the only one who is occasionally disappointed."

"Well, I insist on seeing him to-day, do you understand?"

"Yes, ma'am. Take a seat, please. Your turn will come by and by."

"How long will I have to wait?"

"Depends on circumstances. All these gentlemen are ahead of you. You see that fat man over there?"

"I see him."

"He's good for an hour when he gets inside. You'll follow him; that is, if Mr. Barker isn't called to attend a directors' meeting."

"I can't wait here an hour," snorted the lady.

"Then you'll have to call again. Four o'clock would be a good time—to catch him out," added Dick, under his breath.

"Four o'clock! The idea! I must be home at that hour. I'm a lady and ought to have preference over these men, anyway."

"No distinctions are made in business matters, ma'am."

"Will you take my card into Mr. Barker and tell him my business is of the greatest importance?"

"Certainly, ma'am."

She opened her reticule, took out a card with "Hannah Beakes" inscribed on it, and put it in Dick's hand.

He knocked on the private room door and was told to come in.

"Mrs. Beakes is outside, sir. Can't shake her. Says her business is of the greatest importance. Told her she'd have to wait her turn, but she objected strenuously, and asked me to bring her card in."

"That woman is an infernal nuisance," remarked the broker to the gentleman with whom he was engaged. "Get rid of her somehow, Dick. I can't see her."

"All right, sir," and the boy glided outside.

"Mr. Barker is very sorry, ma'am," he said to the lady, "but he's got to go over to his bank to see about a check. If you wait outside in the corridor you might catch him on the way to the elevator."

"Is he going now?" asked Mrs. Beakes, eagerly.

"I wouldn't be surprised, ma'am, if he went in a moment or two."

The lady made a bee-line for the door and took up her

position in the corridor where she could cut the broker off from the elevator.

She was still walking up and down there impatiently five minutes later when Dick hurried out with a note in his hand to a party in the Mills Building.

The boy chuckled when his eyes rested on her.

"I wonder how long she'll stay on the watch," he thought. "When she gets tired I suppose she'll go back in the waiting-room and try to make her way into the boss's office. She's the most persistent woman I ever saw. I wouldn't like to board at her house. I'll bet she gives the people dried apples for dessert at the table. If they leave the dining-room hungry it doesn't matter, for the dried apples will swell in the stomach and then they'll feel as if they'd had a big meal. If she was to die her relatives would find a dozen savings bank books hidden somewhere in her bedroom. That's always the way with those old people."

Dick caught the elevator and was soon on the street.

More than one broker nodded pleasantly to the boy as he hustled along, for those who knew him liked his cheerful face and found him always polite and gentlemanly in his business dealings with them.

Dick lived in Harlem with his mother, one sister, who was a stenographer in a downtown office, and his invalid father.

Mr. Merriton was an artist, but hadn't been able to earn any money for several years, so the support of the family devolved entirely on the son and daughter, who came to the front like a little man and woman.

It required the greatest economy on Mrs. Merriton's part to keep the pot boiling, but being a clever and industrious little woman she managed to make ends meet from week to week.

Of course, they lived in a cheap flat, but mother and daughter kept it as neat as a new pin, and no visitor would have supposed that the family was pushed for money, as they very often were.

The note that Dick carried on this trip to the Mills Building was addressed to an old lawyer, named Samuel Littleton, on the twelfth floor.

This gentleman's principal business was to look after estates of well-to-do people.

He was also the guardian for several minors, and he was accustomed to invest surplus funds in gilt-edged bonds for the benefit of his clients.

All such business was transacted for him by Mr. Barker, and consequently Dick often had occasion to call at his office.

He knew the old gentleman very well by this time, and Mr. Littleton thought him the nicest boy with whom he came into contact in a business way.

The lawyer employed a bookkeeper, an office boy and a stenographer.

When Dick walked into the outer office the bookkeeper and the office boy were not visible.

Miss Adams, the stenographer, smiled at the young messenger and told him that Mr. Littleton was engaged with a visitor.

"Well, you can take this note in to him, can't you, Miss Adams, and see if there's an answer?" asked Dick.

The stenographer took the note, opened the door of the inner room and entered.

Then she uttered a low scream and fell to the floor in a faint.

Dick saw her fall as he glanced after her through the partly open door.

"Good gracious! What's happened to her?" he ejaculated.

As no one stepped forward to pick the unconscious girl up, which the boy thought exceedingly strange, he believed the emergency justified him in entering the room.

He did so.

As he stooped to reach Miss Adams his attention was attracted by a startling scene to the left.

A fierce-looking, wild-eyed man had Mr. Littleton by the throat, and the lawyer appeared to be at his last gasp.

CHAPTER II.

DICK SAVES LAWYER LITTLETON'S LIFE AND NEARLY LOSES HIS OWN.

The man glared furiously at Dick, and if there ever was murder in a person's eyes it was in his.

He seemed more like a wild animal than a human being,

and his ferocious appearance was enough to intimidate any one whose nerves were not uncommonly strong.

The boy was certainly greatly startled, and for a moment he could do nothing but stare at the terrible scene before his eyes.

Then the lawyer's white face and the desperate predicament he was in appealed to his natural chivalry.

It was his place, be the risk what it might, to try and save Mr. Littleton's life.

It looked as if the old lawyer was in the power of a crazy man, or at least a person temporarily deranged, for there was a maniacal gleam in the man's eyes that showed that his wits were not right.

Dick straightened up, leaving the stenographer to recover or not from her faint, and sprang to Mr. Littleton's assistance.

The lawyer's assailant released his grip on the old gentleman and turned, with a snarl, upon the boy.

Dick avoided the talon-like fingers thrust forward to seize him by dropping on his knees, grabbing the man around the legs and jerking him off his balance.

His head struck on the edge of the lawyer's desk, and he fell to the floor, dazed but full of fight.

Dick jumped upon his chest, pressing both his knees upon the man's arms, and then finding that he could not hope to master him without taking strong measures, he began pummeling him in the face.

The young messenger could hit pretty hard, for he was accustomed to practicing on a punching-bag, and as he didn't believe this man deserved any mercy, he put it to him for all he was worth.

The fellow proved a hard customer to down, in spite of the slugging he was receiving.

By a violent effort he succeeded in dislodging Dick from his chest.

Then he tried to grab the boy by the throat.

Had he succeeded it would have been all up with the messenger lad in a short time.

Dick saved himself by catching the man's two wrists and pinning his arms down.

In this way they struggled about on the carpet for several minutes, the fellow appearing to grow stronger and more dangerous every moment.

Dick had all he could do to keep the fellow's hands from his neck.

He was evidently bent on finishing the boy that way if he only got the chance.

The longer the struggle went on the worse it was for the young messenger.

Fortunately, the bookkeeper, who had been sent on a special errand, returned to the office at that moment.

He heard the racket in the private room and saw the stenographer lying unconscious where she had fallen.

Seeing that something was decidedly wrong inside, he rushed in and beheld his employer stretched back in his revolving chair, like a dead man, and on the floor a boy and a desperate-looking man struggling for the mastery.

"What's the meaning of this?" he exclaimed.

Dick caught a glimpse of his face.

"Help me, Mr. McIntyre," he cried out. "This man is crazy and is trying to kill me!"

"Why, is that you, Dick Merriton!" ejaculated the bookkeeper, in surprise, recognizing him.

Dick could not answer, for the madman renewed his attack on him with the most ferocious earnestness.

Mr. McIntyre lost no time in grabbing the frenzied man just as he succeeded in getting one of his hands on Dick's neck.

The bookkeeper was big and powerful, and he soon tore the fellow away from the boy, but he had a whole lot of trouble holding him.

"Get his hands behind his back, Mr. McIntyre," said Dick.

Between them they succeeded in doing this, then the boy got the man's handkerchief out of his pocket and tied his wrists together while the bookkeeper held him down on his face.

After that they let him roll and struggle impotently about on the floor, the froth issuing from between his set lips, and his livid, bloodsoaked eyes glaring fiercely at them.

"Now, tell me what's the trouble?" asked the bookkeeper. "What happened to Mr. Littleton? He seems to be in a bad way. I'll have to telephone for an ambulance, I'm afraid."

"I found that man in here choking him. We must try and bring him to his senses. I'll get some water."

Dick rushed for the lavatory and fetched a glass of water.

He and Mr. McIntyre worked over the old lawyer with considerable vigor and at last succeeded in bringing him to consciousness.

Dick then turned his attention to Miss Adams, and soon had her on her feet again.

He saw she was a very nervous girl, which accounted for her fainting so easily.

Leading her to her desk, he did his best to soothe her excited nerves.

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear! I never had such a shock in my life!" she said, tremulously. "That man seemed to be killing Mr. Littleton."

"Well, he didn't kill him, Miss Adams. Mr. Littleton is all right, or nearly so, now. Mr. McIntyre and I have got the man fixed so he can't do any more harm. Who is he, and how did he get to see Mr. Littleton?"

"He came into the office a little while ago and asked for Mr. Littleton. Eddie showed him into the private room just before he went out. That's all I know about him. He must be a dreadful man to attack poor old Mr. Littleton."

"He's as crazy as a March hare," replied Dick. "That's what's the matter with him. Why, he nearly did me up, too, when I followed you into the room and interfered to prevent him from completing his murderous work."

"Why, your face is all scratched and bleeding," said the girl.

"His nails did that. He gave me the fight of my life, and if Mr. McIntyre hadn't come in when he did I am afraid he would have mastered me. He seemed to be as strong as a bull."

At that moment the bookkeeper appeared at the door and called Dick in.

Mr. Littleton looked something of a wreck as he sat back in his chair.

He smiled faintly at the young messenger.

"I judge from what Mr. McIntyre has just told me that you interfered in time to save my life. I assure you that I am very grateful to you, and I am sorry that you got into trouble yourself through your plucky conduct," said the lawyer, faintly.

"Well, sir, I guess I saved you, all right, though I was half afraid that I came too late. That fellow had both his hands about your windpipe, your tongue was out, and you were turning black in the face. I went for him at once. He released you and jumped at me, like a wild animal. I thought I had him at first, but I didn't. He stood out against the heavy pounding that I gave him, and then came back at me stronger than ever. I had the time of my life trying to keep his hands from my throat. If he had ever fastened those claws of his in my neck it would have been all up with me. Mr. McIntyre didn't turn up a moment too soon. He got me out of a bad box, and I'm just as obliged to him as you are to me, sir."

"I don't believe I can ever be too grateful to you, Merriton, for you certainly saved my life."

"I am very glad I appeared here in time to do it, then," replied Dick. "Who is that man, and how came he to call on you?"

"His name is Hardy. He's the heir-at-law of a large estate which I am administering through the probate court. Owing to a mental derangement brought about by dissipation, I had to have him sent to a sanitarium. Complete separation from his customary haunts and habits brought about an apparent cure, so that at his urgent appeal I was induced to apply for his discharge last week. He has been out of the sanitarium five days, and as far as I could see he seemed to have fully recovered his normal condition. When he called a while ago and sent in his name, I received him in here as I would any one with whom I had business. He shook hands with me in a friendly way, and there wasn't a sign about him to warn me of what was coming. Our interview had hardly begun, and I was explaining matters connected with his estate, before he began to show some signs of excitement. He demanded to know if I intended to return him to the sanitarium. I said 'no,' whereupon he said he had been told that I was having him shadowed by a detective. I denied this, for it is not true. He then began abusing me for causing his confinement in the sanitarium. I told him I had done so for his own good. This answer only seemed to add fuel to his excitement. He cursed me, swore I should never have him confined again, and then sprang upon me with an insane fury that startled me. In a moment his fingers were about my throat. I struggled desperately with him, tried to call out, and finally lost my senses. I knew no more until I found you and Mr.

McIntyre rubbing my hands and bathing my face. I recognize that I had a narrow escape, and that I would have been a dead man but for you, Merriton."

"What shall we do about this man now? Send for the police and have him removed to Bellevue?" asked Mr. McIntyre, pointing to the heir-at-law where he lay upon the floor, with a cunning leer on his handsome countenance.

"I am afraid there is no other alternative," replied the lawyer. "He is too dangerous to be permitted to remain at large. It is too bad, for he was a fine man before his brain became affected."

The bookkeeper went to the 'phone and communicated with the nearest police station.

While he was thus engaged Dick saw the envelope he had brought on the floor where it had been dropped by the stenographer.

He picked it up and handed it to Mr. Littleton.

The lawyer read it and told him to tell Mr. Barker "all right."

As soon as Mr. McIntyre returned to the room, Dick said he'd have to go unless Mr. Littleton wished him to remain.

The lawyer said he would not detain him longer, thanked him once more for what he had done for him, and the young messenger departed.

CHAPTER III.

WHAT A BANANA PEEL BROUGHT DICK MERRITON.

When Dick returned to his own office he told Mr. Barker that Lawyer Littleton said "all right" in answer to the note.

Then he told the broker about the exciting experience he had had in the lawyer's office, and how Mr. Littleton had nearly been choked to death by the crazy heir-at-law of an estate he was putting through the probate court.

"You had a narrow escape, Dick," said Mr. Barker. "You may thank your stars that you have only a few scratches to show for your desperate encounter. An insane man is always a particularly dangerous antagonist when his mania takes a homicidal turn. Mr. Littleton will doubtless be grateful to you as long as he lives."

"Did Mrs. Brakes bother you after I went off with that message?"

"No. I did not see her."

"I got her out in the corridor by telling her that you had to go to your bank to see about a check, and that she might catch you on the way to the elevator. She was watching for you when I left the building."

"She must have gone away when she found that I did not come out. She's a nuisance. I wish she'd transfer her business to some other broker."

"I don't believe any other broker is anxious for her custom," laughed Dick.

"Well, keep her out if you can whenever she calls. Maybe she'll take the hint after a while that her room is better than her company," said the broker, turning to his desk.

Dick said "all right," and walked outside and sat down.

He picked up a copy of a Wall Street daily and began to read the latest financial intelligence.

"If I had \$100 I'd slap it into C. & O. on margin," he said to himself. "That stock is going up before long, just as sure as the sun shines. It's lower now than I ever remember seeing it before. I'll bet there are a lot of people loading up with it at its present figure. It's too bad that I haven't got a little spare cash. I have missed a lot of good things, not to speak of tips, because I was unable to back them. I wonder when I'll see \$100 that I can say is my own?"

The buzz of the bell behind his chair told Dick that Mr. Barker wanted to see him, so he rushed into the private room.

"Take this note over to Mr. Jenkins at the Exchange," said the broker.

"All right, sir," replied Dick.

He got his hat and was off like a shot.

When he reached the railing in the Exchange that kept the messengers from intruding on the floor he asked an attache to find Mr. Jenkins for him.

While waiting for the broker to show up, Dick watched the animated scene presented before his eyes.

He saw quite a crowd around the C. & O. standard, and noticed that a prominent broker was occasionally buying good-sized blocks of the stock.

Looking at the blackboard he observed that the price of C. & O. had already advanced a point since the market opened.

"I knew it was bound to go up soon," said Dick to himself. "It's hard that I can't get in on a good thing like that. Who knows but Broker Mandelbaum is acting for some syndicate, and that there may soon be a regular boom in that stock? Such things are cropping up in various stocks every month in the year. If I could only get a start I believe I could make money out of the market. I've noticed that my judgment is pretty good about those stocks I have kept track of. I can generally tell when they're going to rise, and when they're going in the other direction. That is as good as having a grip on the market. But it doesn't do me any good, just the same."

Just then Mr. Jenkins came up to the railing, took the note from his hands, read it and nodded "all right."

That was Dick's dismissal, and he left.

As he started to cross Broad Street he stepped on a banana peel.

The peel of the banana for some reason when separated from the fruit and cast away seems to acquire a malignant desire to breed trouble.

This particular banana peel had evidently been lying in wait for the first unsuspecting shoe that stepped in its direction.

That she belonged to Dick, and the next moment the treacherous peel had performed its diabolical mission and landed the boy in the gutter, an object of ridicule to all the boys in the immediate vicinity.

Dick alighted on his left elbow with force enough to make him understand that there are softer things in the world than Belgian blocks.

He was jarred by the fall and not a little dazed by the shock.

A sympathetic bootblack ran up and helped him on his feet, while several newsboys gathered about him with grinning countenances.

The bootblack, noticing a rather dirty blue envelope near the curb, and thinking Dick had dropped it, picked it up and shoved it into his hand.

Then he proceeded to brush the young messenger off.

"Thanks, Micky," said Dick, recognizing the urchin. "When I get rich I'll give you a steady job shining my shoes."

Then he hurried away with the envelope in his hand.

He was half-way back to the office when the envelope attracted his notice.

"How the deuce did I get that?" he said, looking at it curiously. From the feel there was something in it bulkier than a mere note, and the boy saw that it was sealed, but no writing on the outside.

Wondering what was in it, he was about to tear it open when a messenger named Tom Hurley, who had witnessed his mishap, came up and slapped him on the back.

"Hello, Merriton," he grinned. "I see you are givin' free acrobatic exhibitions on the street now."

Dick didn't like Tom Hurley, and the latter's remark didn't make him feel particularly happy.

"What's the matter with you?" growled Dick.

"Nothin'; but it was enough to make a hoss laugh to see you tryin' to stand on your head without holdin' on to anythin'."

"Don't get too gay, Tom Hurley, or you may find yourself trying to stand on your ear without holding on to anything, either."

"Who'll make me stand on my ear?" asked Hurley, aggressively.

"I think I could make you if I took a notion to," replied Dick, dropping the envelope in his pocket. "You're the chap who fired a rotten apple at me the other day."

"Me fire an apple at you? You're dreamin'."

"I saw you sneak into the doorway of the Smith Building after you did it. I suppose you thought nobody had spotted you. Now, I advise you not to do it again or there's liable to be trouble. Understand?"

"Yah! Who you talkin' to?"

"I'm talking to you. That's plain English, isn't it?"

Dick's resolute demeanor evidently intimidated Hurley, who, though burlier than Merriton, lacked real pluck.

He glared balefully at Dick.

"Are you lookin' for a scrap?" he snarled.

"Not particularly, but I want you to understand that there'll be something doing if you get too gay with me."

"Aw! You make me sick!" sneered Hurley. "I s'pose you think you can lick me."

"I'm not thinking about the matter at all. I'm only just advising you to leave me alone in the future. That's all I've got to say to you."

Thus speaking, Dick walked off, leaving Hurley in no amiable frame of mind.

When the young messenger took his seat in the waiting-room he thought about the blue envelope again.

He took it out of his pocket and tore one end open.

Then he inserted two fingers, felt a wad of paper and drew it forth.

He gave a gasp of astonishment when he saw that he held a bunch of money in his fingers.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MECHANICAL MOUSE.

Dick gazed at the money like one in a dream.

He opened it out and counted the bills—there were seven \$100 notes.

"Gee! What a find! Seven hundred dollars. I wonder who lost such a bunch of money?"

He looked the envelope all over, inside and out, but not a scrap of writing was there about it.

The bills were new ones that had apparently never been in circulation.

"Somebody drew them from one of the banks, put them in this envelope and then lost it on the street. I'll bet a hundred people stepped on it and not one ever thought of picking it up. Thought it was an empty envelope that somebody had thrown away. I wouldn't have picked it up either, I'll bet. I pass lots of old envelopes every day lying around in the gutters. Micky must have picked it up and put it in my hand, thinking I dropped it when I slipped up on that banana peel. I wonder if this money will be advertised for? If I lost a blank envelope full of money I'd figure that there wasn't one chance in a thousand of my ever seeing it again. Whoever picked it up would be pretty sure to freeze on to it, especially if there was no clue to the owner about it. Well, if it's advertised for to-morrow morning, and I see the ad., I'll return it, for I don't believe in keeping what doesn't belong to me. It's my opinion that it pays to be honest in the long run. At any rate, I was brought up to think so."

Dick returned the money to the dirty blue envelope and put the envelope carefully away in his pocket.

In a few minutes he was sent out on another errand.

Later on he was sent to the Exchange again and there he saw another broker buying C. & O. shares when he could get them.

The price of the stock was up another half a point.

"I wish that \$700 I found were mine, I'll bet I'd soak it on C. & O. I consider that stock a safe risk, and a winner at that," said Dick to himself.

When he got home that afternoon he surprised his father and mother with a sight of the contents of the blue envelope.

"I got hold of that through slipping up on a banana peel," he said, with a grin.

Then he explained how the envelope came into his possession, through the agency, as he believed, of Micky Dooley, a bootblack.

"If Micky ever heard that he handed me over \$700 that he might have kept himself he'd have a fit," laughed Dick. "I'm going to watch the lost and found columns of the papers in the morning to see if it's advertised for. If it isn't I'll figure that the owner has given it up as gone for good. In which case it'll be as good as mine."

Next morning Dick looked the lost and found advertisements over, but there was no mention of a lost blue envelope with \$700 in new bills in it.

"I guess this money is mine, all right," he said. "But I mustn't be too quick jumping at conclusions. It may be advertised to-morrow, or the day after. However, I think I can afford to take a risk on it. I'll put it in my bones that I will, I'll get a good stake out of the money, anyway. I'm entitled to something for restoring that \$700 if I ever find the owner, and I don't ask anything more than a chance to use it just now to my advantage."

So at the first chance Dick got that morning he went around to a little bank in Nassau Street, that did a brokerage business for small investors, and planked the \$700 down as margin for 150 shares of C. & O. at the ruling price, 46.

On his way back to the office he saw a street fakir selling a mechanical mouse toy.

There was quite a crowd around him and Dick stopped to see what the attraction was.

The man was winding up one of his mice while he talked glibly to the spectators.

When the winding-up process was completed he placed the toy on his cuff and immediately the mouse ran up his coat sleeve, and he caught it as it was going over his shoulder.

Then he placed it on the sidewalk and it ran between his legs and fell over the curb.

Dick thought what a fine joke it would be to play one of them off on his sister's pet Maltese cat.

The price of the ingenious toy was ten cents, and while Dick was looking on several people bought them.

Dick followed their example.

When he reached the corridor on which his office was he took the mouse out of its box, wound it up and set it down on the marble floor to see if it worked all right.

It did, and looked as natural as life.

"That's the greatest ever," he chuckled, as he wound it up again and returned it to its box.

He had hardly taken his seat before the door opened and Mrs. Beakes came in.

She looked like a woman bent on business.

Her countenance was more acid-looking than ever.

One of her boarders, who owed her two weeks' pay, had skipped out the night before, leaving his small trunk empty for her to take possession of.

The loss of \$14 preyed on her spirits and she felt rather ugly.

"Is Mr. Barker in?" she said sharply, glaring at Dick.

"I think he went to a directors' meeting, ma'am," replied the boy, politely.

"I don't believe it," she snapped. "Aren't those two men waitin' to see him?"

"I don't know, ma'am. I just came in and I didn't ask them."

Just then the door of the private room opened and a visitor came out.

"There, I knew he was in. Directors' meetin', indeed!" she sniffed. "Take my name inside at once. I want to see Mr. Barker on particular business."

"Didn't you see him yesterday, ma'am?" asked Dick, innocently.

"No, I didn't," she snorted. "Take my name in, do you hear?"

"Certainly, ma'am," and Dick walked into the private room to notify the broker that Mrs. Beakes was outside again, and that she looked full of fight.

"Tell her I'm busy," said Mr. Barker.

"I reckon you ain't too busy to see me," piped a voice at the door.

Dick and the trader turned to see Mrs. Beakes' vinegary countenance thrust in at the opening.

"Well," replied Mr. Barker, visibly annoyed, "I can't give you over five minutes, madam."

"Are you goin' to a directors' meetin'?" she said, walking to the chair beside his desk.

Her tone was sarcastic and Dick could have sworn that he heard her chuckle in a dry way, though there wasn't the ghost of a smile on her countenance.

The boy retired outside.

When the five minutes were up by the clock he took the mechanical mouse out of his pocket and knocked on the private room door.

"Did you ring, Mr. Barker?" he asked, stepping into the room.

"No, Dick. Will you tell Mr. Hollis I'll see him in a moment?" replied the trader.

"Yes, sir."

Dick dropped his handkerchief on the floor.

Stooping to recover it he placed the mouse on the rug and released it.

It made straight for Mrs. Beakes.

Her sharp eyes discovered it at once, and with a shriek she jumped from the chair and dashed through the door into the waiting room.

The cashier of the establishment happened to be approaching the door at that moment with his hands full of papers.

The boarding house mistress struck him full tilt and both went down together on the floor.

The lady scrambled on her feet and began to express her opinion of the cashier in a very loud key.

All the customers in the room looked on and felt highly amused.

Most of them knew the lady by sight and also by reputation.

The cashier recovered his papers and apologized, though he did not consider himself to blame.

Dick, in the meantime, had picked up the mouse.

Mr. Barker had been astonished at the lady's outcry and the remarkable agility she displayed in leaving the room.

Dick was about to explain when the racket in the outside room attracted their attention.

The boy ran to the door to see what the trouble was about and found the lady going for the cashier with her tongue.

When he saw what excitement he had caused with the toy he concluded to say nothing about his agency in the matter, though he was sure the broker wouldn't call him down for getting rid of his undesirable customer.

So he dropped the mouse into his pocket, went up to Mr. Hollis and told him that Mr. Barker was ready to see him.

Soon after the door closed on that gentleman the sound of laughter was heard through the keyhole, and Dick guessed that Mr. Hollis was telling the broker about what had occurred outside.

By this time Mrs. Beakes, having said all she wanted to, made a line for the door opening on the corridor and disappeared through it.

CHAPTER V.

HOW DICK CAME OUT ON C. & O.

The cashier, who felt that he had not figured to any great advantage before the customers of the house, entered the private office with a very red face, while Dick picked up a newspaper and hid his grinning face behind it.

"I hope that will keep Mrs. Beakes away from here for some time to come," he said to himself. "She made a show of herself that time, and I should think she'd be ashamed to show her nose in here again. But you can't tell anything about people of her make-up. She's just as likely to come in here to-morrow as not."

Under the cover of the paper he replaced the mechanical toy in its box and returned it to his pocket just as Eddie Gray, Lawyer Littleton's messenger, entered the room with a letter and package in his hand.

"Hello, Eddie," said Dick. "I s'pose you want to see Mr. Barker? He's engaged at present, but will be at liberty in a few minutes."

"I didn't come to see him, but to see you," said the boy.

"To see me, eh? What about?"

"Mr. Littleton told me to give you this letter and this box."

Dick looked at the letter in some surprise and saw that it was addressed to him.

The box also had his name on it in the lawyer's handwriting.

"What did he send me these for?" asked Dick, much puzzled.

"How should I know? Read the letter and you'll find out, I guess."

Dick tore open the envelope and glanced over the enclosure, which ran as follows:

"My dear young friend: I send you herewith a small token of my appreciation of the valuable service you did for me yesterday. I trust you will be pleased with it, and that you will find it as useful as it is ornamental.

"Your sincere friend,

"SAMUEL LITTLETON."

Dick opened the package and found a flat, oblong, paste-board box.

Removing the cover he beheld a silver-mounted alligator wallet, with the monogram "R. M." engraved on a small silver plate near the catch.

"That's a fine pocketbook, all right," said Dick.

"Bet your life it is," replied Eddie. "That's what you get for doing my boss's favor. He says you're the finest boy in Wall Street."

"You heard about what happened at your place yesterday, did you?"

"Sure, I did. Why wouldn't I? Nellie told me all about it. Say, Dick, I think she's kind of mashed on you," grinned the boy.

"Get out! What are you giving me?" said Dick, flushing up, for, to tell the truth, he rather admired Mr. Littleton's pretty stenographer.

"Well, she's always talking to me about you. She says you're awfully good-looking and the politest boy she's ever met. She told me yesterday afternoon that you brought her out of her fainting spell, and was real nice to her."

"I couldn't do less for her than I did," replied Dick. "She needn't feel under any obligations to me, and you can tell her so."

Dick then opened the wallet and in one of the compartments he found a brand-new \$100 bill.

"One hundred dollars!" exclaimed Eddie. "You're rich!"

Dick knew that it was customary for anybody presenting a pocketbook to put at least a bright penny in it for luck.

Whether he expected to find such a penny in the wallet or not we cannot say, but he was certainly surprised to find such a large bill.

Of course he would have to accept it, and so he told Eddie to convey his thanks to Mr. Littleton, and his appreciation of such a valuable present.

"Luck seems to be coming my way at last," he said to himself after Eddie had gone. "If C. & O. turns up trumps, too, I'll be right in it."

When it was time for him to go home he took a look at the tape to see how his stock was getting on, and was delighted to find that it had already gone up a whole point since he bought it.

Next day C. & O. began to attract attention at the Exchange, and quite a number of transactions were recorded, the price going to 49.

Dick carried a message to Withers & Co. that afternoon, and he went up in Bob Browning's elevator.

He went clear to the top of the building on the trip up, so as to have a talk with Bob, and got off at the floor he was bound for on the way down.

He told Bob about his adventure in Mr. Littleton's office, but had to leave off in the middle of his narrative.

"To be continued in our next," he laughed as he sprang off at the sixth floor.

After delivering his message he waited for Bob's elevator as it came up, went to the roof with him, and finally finished his story about the crazy man on the trip down.

Next morning when he was sent to the Exchange about eleven o'clock he found a lot of excitement on the floor.

He soon discovered that C. & O. was booming and had already gone up to 52.

While he was detained at the rail he saw 54 posted on the big blackboard, and he felt tickled to death.

"I guess I'd better sell out now that I'm about \$1,200 ahead of the game," he thought, "for it might go the other way as suddenly as it has advanced. I didn't calculate that it would go much above 50."

He had a message to take back to the office and couldn't go to the bank.

When he got back Mr. Barker rushed him off with three messages that were important.

In one of the offices he visited he heard two brokers talking about C. & O.

One of them said that it looked as if there was a syndicate behind it, in which case it was likely to go as high as 65, or over.

The conversation encouraged Dick to hold on to his stock a while longer.

In any case, he found no chance to go to the little bank on Nassau Street until after the Exchange had closed for the day.

The last transaction in C. & O. recorded was 600 shares at 62.

For fear that he wouldn't find an opportunity next day to get rid of his shares he visited the bank on his way home and left word with the margin clerk to sell his holdings in the morning.

His 150 shares went at the opening price of 62 3-8, and on the following morning he got a statement and a check for about \$3,150.

With the \$100 he had received from Mr. Littleton that made him worth all together \$3,250, which was a considerable sum for a messenger boy.

He was prepared to hand over to the owner the \$700 he had found in the blue envelope, provided he could discover that person, but there seemed small chance that he ever would, for he had failed to find any advertisement relating to it, though he looked at the papers every day.

When he went home that night he handed his mother \$250.

"Why, what is this, Dick?" asked Mrs. Merriton, looking at the money.

"That's yours, to do with as you wish."

"Mine!" ejaculated the surprised little woman.

"Yes, mother."

"Will you explain how it happens to be mine? Did you find the owner of the \$700, and is this what he gave you for returning him the money?"

"No, mother. I haven't found the owner of the \$700, and I don't believe I ever will now."

"Then this is part of that money?"

"Not exactly, though the \$700 helped me to make it."

"I'm sure I don't understand you, Dick," she said, in a puzzled tone.

"Well, mother, I took a chance in the stock market with the \$700, and I made—how much do you think?"

"How could I tell?"

"I made \$2,450."

"It can't be possible!" exclaimed his astonished mother.

"Here's the proof of it—a certificate of deposit in the Nassau Street Bank for \$3,000. You see it's made out in my name."

"Why, Dick, how could you make so much money in so short a time?"

"Why, you can make a million in Wall Street in a shorter time than that if you've got enough funds to back a big deal."

"And do you mean to say you are worth \$3,000?"

"That certificate says so, doesn't it?"

"Go in and tell your father, right away. Maybe he'll understand it. It seems incredible to me."

When Dick told his father all the particulars of his C. & O. deal, and showed him the certificate, he understood the situation and congratulated his son on his good luck.

"What are you going to do with that money, Dick?"

"Make more with it."

"Do you think you'll be successful in doing so?" asked Mr. Merriton, who had an idea, in common with well-informed people, that Wall Street speculation was a mighty risky game of chance.

"I expect to be successful, for I don't intend to take any more chances than I can help. I have studied the market right along for more than a year, and have seen lots of chances to make money that I couldn't take advantage of because I had no money to speculate with. Now that I've got a stake it will be different. When I find a good stock selling low, and the market show signs of picking up, I'll probably invest half my money in it, and sell out as soon as it goes up a few points. To make money in Wall Street you must buy good stock when they're low and sell on the first rise, taking care not to hold on too long. A bird in the hand is always worth two in the bush. The people who hold on for the last dollar are the persons who get caught in the shuffle."

"Your argument looks good, but it doesn't seem to work out with any great degree of regularity. It's the unexpected that oftenest happens in Wall Street. At least, so I have heard."

"That's true enough. I intended to sell C. & O. at around 50, and would have been well satisfied to have merely doubled my \$700. I never dreamed that the stock would go to 60 even. It really did go to 65 5-8 yesterday afternoon, and then it dropped back to 59 before the Exchange closed. It's down to 56 to-day."

"How did you happen to hold on?"

"For two reasons—first, I couldn't get the time to go to the bank and order the stock sold, and then I heard a couple of prominent brokers say that it was liable to go to 65. Of course such luck doesn't happen very often. I think if a person can make five dollars a share profit on a deal he's doing pretty well. I'd sooner sell out at a five-point advance than chance a ten, unless I was speculating on a pretty sure tip."

They talked the matter over till supper-time, but in the end Mr. Merriton thought Dick had better put the \$3,000 in a savings bank than risk it in Wall Street.

CHAPTER VI.

DICK BUYS SOME MINING SHARES.

After supper Dick put on his hat and coat and went around to Prof. Gannan's gymnasium to exercise and take a lesson in boxing from the professor's assistant, Patsy Hogan.

He expected his friend Bob Browning to drop in and have a go with him with the gloves, and as Bob was a good one, their set-tos were generally lively affairs.

Dick had just finished his lesson when Bob appeared.

"Come here, Dick, I want to tell you something," he said, leading Merriton over to a seat where they could be by themselves.

"Well, what is it, Bob?" asked Dick, with some interest.

"Can you use a pointer on the market if I give it to you?"

"A pointer!" exclaimed Dick.

Bob nodded.

"It's a good one," he said.

"How do you know it's good?"

"I'll tell you. I suppose you know Billings, the broker. His firm has their office in our building."

"I know of him. He's one of the solid men of the Street."

"He came into my elevator to-day along with a lawyer whose office is on the fourteenth floor. They were the only passengers I had that trip up, and Billings went up to the fourteenth floor with the lawyer."

"Well?" said Dick.

"On the way up they talked together in a low tone, but I heard enough to know that Billings is getting up a syndicate to boom D. & L."

"Sure of that, are you?" asked Dick, eagerly.

"Positive. He told the lawyer to buy as many shares of D. & L. right away as he could afford, and that he'd make a good thing out of it inside of two weeks. Now, if you can raise some money I'd advise you to do the same. Billings said the stock would rise about 20 points as soon as they had cornered the available supply."

Dick asked Bob a number of questions, some of which he was able to answer, while some he couldn't throw any light on.

However, Dick learned enough to satisfy him that Bob had actually got hold of a valuable tip, and he determined to use it right away.

Next morning he looked up D. & L. in the market report and found that it was going at 58.

He found a chance during the morning to slip up to the little bank and order 300 shares to be bought for his account.

He was tempted to put up all his money on 500 shares, but decided that would be taking too big a risk.

The stock might go down four or five points before it started upward in earnest, and so if he didn't keep enough cash in reserve to answer a possible call for more margin he would stand a good chance of being wiped out altogether.

"It doesn't do to be a grab-all down here, you're almost certain to land in the soup. That's as bad as holding out for the highest price in a boom. If I'm going in for speculating I've got to hold my desires in check. I must always keep an anchor out to the windward so that if the unexpected happens I may have a show to save myself."

Two days after Dick bought D. & L. it was down to 56, representing a loss to him of \$600.

On the third day the price fluctuated a good bit, finally closing at a half of a point lower still.

Next day, however, it picked up and went back to 58.

As Dick went almost every day to the King Building he kept Bob informed as to what was doing in D. & L.

Bob asked him several times how many shares of the stock he had been able to buy, but Dick wouldn't tell him.

"Why are you so close about it?" asked Bob, almost petulantly. "I know you couldn't buy many—not over ten or twenty."

"Well, if you know that, what's the use of asking me about it?" laughed Dick.

"I think you might tell a fellow after he gave you such a good tip."

"The reason why I don't want to tell you is because I have made it a rule to keep my business to myself. It's a good rule, and if I break it once I might as well throw it overboard altogether. I acknowledge my obligation to you for the pointer, and I promise you that if I make a good thing out of it I'll make it all right with you."

"Oh, I don't want you to give me anything for it. You won't be able to make so much at the best. If I thought you had 100 shares I'd be willing to accept a small stake from you; but of course you couldn't raise enough to meet the margin on that much."

"Maybe I have 100 shares, or even more, for all you know," grinned Dick.

"Oh, get out. It would have cost you \$580 to hold 100 shares, and that's a whole lot more money than you could raise. I calculated that with that \$100 you got from Lawyer Littleton, and a few more dollars that you might be able to borrow, you would manage to get 20 shares. If the price boomed 20 minutes you would make about \$400.

That would make you worth \$500. If you cared to allow me \$25 for the tip I'd be satisfied. That's the way I figured the matter out."

"I see you have a great head for figures, Bob, so I won't say anything more about the deal until I see how I come out of it."

Three days later D. & L. was going at 60.

It was about this time that a seedy-looking man came into the office, just as Dick was going home for the day, and asked for Mr. Barker.

"He's gone to Lakewood, where his family is stopping this winter, and he won't be at the office till ten to-morrow," said Dick, not taking much stock in the visitor.

"He buys mining stock, doesn't he?" asked the man.

"Have you got some for sale?"

"Yes."

"What is it? I don't believe Mr. Barker will touch it unless it's one of the standard mines. It wouldn't pay him to do so."

"It's the Mohawk Central."

"Where is the mine located? In the Goldfield district?"

"No. It's at Paradise, Nevada."

"Is it listed on the Goldfield Exchange?"

"Yes."

"All right. I'll look up the recent market reports and see how it's ruling."

Dick went into his employer's private room where he knew Mr. Barker kept the reports of the Western exchanges on file.

He had to look back six days before it found a quotation of Mohawk Central.

It was quoted at 15 cents.

He looked back further and found that the stock had sold at 18 cents.

Further back still there were quotations of 25 and 35 cents.

The stock had evidently been dropping steadily in price.

Dick came back and told the caller that there wasn't one chance in fifty that Mr. Barker would bother with it.

"How many shares have you for sale?"

"Five thousand."

"It was worth about \$750 a week ago, but, judging from the slump in it I should think it isn't worth over \$500 today."

"It's a good mine," insisted the man.

"I don't care how good it is. Even if it should be quoted to-morrow at 10 cents it's hardly likely you'll be able to sell it at that price. Better see some Curb broker. He might be able to sell it for you."

"But all the city exchanges are closed," said the caller. "Business is over for the day. I want to raise some money to-night."

"I'll loan you \$50 on your shares if they're all right," said Dick. "I'll agree to hold them a week to give you a chance to redeem them."

"Have you got \$50 to loan?" asked the man, in some surprise.

"If I didn't have it I couldn't make you the offer, could I?" replied Dick.

"Maybe you'd like to buy the stock outright? It ought to be worth \$500. But, as I'm in urgent need of ready money, I'll let it go for \$300 cash. If you haven't the money perhaps you and the clerks would make a pool and buy the shares. You could sell the stock to-morrow at a profit of twenty-five per cent."

"You have the stock with you?"

"Of course," replied the caller, drawing from his pocket an oblong envelope, out of which he took five certificates for 1,000 shares each in the Mohawk Central Gold Mining Co., of Paradise, Nevada, made out in the name of Alexander Badlam.

Dick glanced them over.

"Is your name Alexander Badlam?" he inquired of the visitor.

"It is."

"How long have you had this stock?"

"Ever since the mine was put on the market. It is treasury stock, as you can see. Each of the certificates cost me \$100. At one time the shares almost reached their par value of \$1. I could easily have sold them for 90 cents. I didn't need money then, and held on to them, expecting they would go to \$3 or \$4 a share."

"When the price slumped why didn't you sell the stock? It was quoted at 35 cents in the market report of six weeks ago."

"For several reasons. I had confidence in the mine and

believed that the value of the stock would go up again in time. In fact, I still believe that any one who will buy and hold these shares will make a good thing out of them eventually."

"What's your reason for believing so?"

"I've been through the mine, and am a good judge of mining property."

"And yet you are willing to dispose of them at a loss?"

"I have to. I must have \$300 right away."

"Why don't you wait till to-morrow and offer them to some Curb broker? You might be able to get \$500."

"Because \$300 now would be as good as \$600 to-morrow."

"Well, take a seat, Mr. Badlam. I'll show the certificates to our cashier and see what he thinks of them."

Dick went into the counting room.

"Will you look at these certificates, Mr. Sheldon, and let me know if, in your opinion, they are genuine?" said Dick to the cashier. "A man who says he is Alexander Badlam, the owner of them, is outside. He wants to sell them at a price below the presumed market value. I looked up the Goldfield market reports and find that the stock has been steadily dropping in price. Mr. Badlam, if that is really his name, told me that he could have sold them at one time for 90 cents a share. The latest quotation I could find is 15 cents, and that's a week old. I guess the shares are not worth over 10 cents to-day, if they are worth that."

"What does he want for the stock?" asked the cashier.

"He offered it to me for 6 cents a share."

"Humph! The certificates seem to be genuine. Go to the 'phone and call up the Mining Exchange. If the secretary hasn't gone home ask him if he can give you any particulars about the Mohawk Central. Give him the numbers and Mr. Badlam's name. The certificates may have been stolen."

So Dick went to the 'phone, got connected with the Mining Exchange, but found that all the officials had gone away. He could learn nothing from that source.

He then called up the office of a big Curb broker, got the broker on the wire and asked him about the stock.

"I'll give 7 1-4 cents for a small quantity of the stock, but I'm not particularly anxious to buy it. There is no call for it of late, and it would have to be offered considerably below its market value," he said.

"Would you buy 5,000 shares at that figure?" asked Dick.

"No. I wouldn't give over 6 3-4 cents at the outside for that amount."

"Thank you, sir. Good-by," and the boy rang off.

Dick reported what he had learned to the cashier.

"Tell the man to come in to-morrow morning and see Mr. Barker," said Mr. Sheldon.

"He wants to raise \$300 this afternoon on that stock."

"He can't raise it here. Send him over to Mr. Hayden. He seems willing to buy it for 6 3-4 cents. That'll give him \$37 more. I doubt, however, if Hayden will buy the certificates from a stranger."

Dick returned to the visitor.

"I'm afraid I can't do anything for you, Mr. Badlam," said the boy. "I have communicated with a big Curb broker, and the most he would give for the certificates is 6 3-4 cents a share. We don't know you, and it isn't customary to purchase such certificates from strangers. I'm willing, however, to let you have \$100 on them, the balance to be paid you to-morrow if everything is all right. I am making this offer on my own responsibility."

The visitor showed his disappointment.

"I've letters here from Goldfield to prove that I'm Alexander Badlam. I must raise \$300 to-day, or I'll lose a good opportunity to make money."

"Where are you stopping?"

"Mills Hotel, No. 2."

"Are you registered there as Alexander Badlam?"

"I am."

"Let me see your letters."

The visitor produced several.

Dick looked them over.

They seemed to establish the man's identity as Alexander Badlam.

"All right," said Dick, "I'll take a chance and let you have \$300 for the stock."

"I'm much obliged to you," said the man, gratefully. "I don't see how you can lose anything by it. If you can afford to, I earnestly advise you to hold on to those certificates. Some day they'll be valuable, mark my words. At any rate, if you will hold them a month I may be able to

buy them back at an advance, no matter if their market value goes down to 5 cents a share."

Dick got him to make out a bill of sale for the stock and then took him up to the little bank on Nassau Street and drew \$300 on his certificate of deposit.

Mr. Badlam then took a Broadway car and Dick went home with the mining stock in his pocket.

CHAPTER VII.

DICK MAKES A BUNCH OF MONEY IN D. & L.

Dick wondered on his way home whether he had done a foolish thing after all in buying the Mohawk Central stock from a total stranger.

If he chose to sell it next day he couldn't expect to make more than a ten per cent. profit, which was not much considering the risk he ran of the stock having been stolen from the rightful owner.

On the other hand, if everything was all right and he held on to it for a future profit, he might find that the mine was a valueless property, in which case he would be out the whole \$300.

"It certainly doesn't speak well for a stock to take a slump from 90 to 15 or lower. Looks as if the bottom had fallen out of the mine. Well, I don't care. If I get it in the neck it will teach me a lesson to be more careful in the future."

He showed the certificates to his father.

"The par value of this stock is \$5,000. It's nominal value is about \$500. I gave \$300 for it, and have an offer of \$337.50 for it. As it was once worth 90 cents a share I think I'll hold on to it on the chance of it going up to 25 or 30 cents. I guess \$300 won't break me if I should lose it in the long run."

That's the way Dick explained the matter to his father, and as Mr. Merriton did not know much about mining stocks he did not criticise his son's speculation.

Next morning the boy brought the certificates downtown and showed them to Mr. Barker, telling him how they had come into his possession.

"It was very foolish of you to invest your little money in that stock, Dick," said the broker. "I thought you were sharper than to do such a thing as that. While Mohawk Central once attracted some attention in the mining market, the mine has since failed to realize the expectations based on its early output. Unless new developments come to light it is more than probable that it will be dropped from the mining exchanges and then the stock will have no speculative value, which means that nobody will care to buy it. I'll write a letter to the secretary of the Mining Exchange about it and you can take it over now. If you can get what you paid for it, or a small advance on it, you'd better get rid of it, and keep your hands off such stuff in the future."

"Mr. Hayden, of No. — Broad Street, offered \$337.50 for it over the 'phone yesterday afternoon. It was practically on the strength of that I made the deal."

"Then if I were you I'd let him have it, unless the secretary of the Exchange has something encouraging to say about the mine."

Mr. Barker wrote the note and handed it to Dick.

"Get back as soon as you can," he said.

"Yes, sir," and the young messenger started for New Street at a rapid clip.

The secretary of the Exchange was in his office and he read Dick's note.

"There hasn't been a sale of Mohawk Central recorded in a week," he said. "The last quotation was 15 cents. I doubt, however, if the stock could be sold on the Curb, or in Jersey City, to-day for over half that. It might fetch 10 or 12 cents a share in Goldfield, if a purchaser turned up. Until fresh developments occur in the mine its speculative value will be problematical."

"Are there any prospects of improvement in the mine's output?" asked Dick.

"The mine is being worked right along. The management is trying to recover the lost lead. If they find it, or a new vein of good paying ore, the stock will naturally rise in value, proportionate to the demand for it on the market."

"I know a person who has just bought 5,000 shares of the stock for \$300," went on Dick. "Don't you think it would pay him to hold on to that stock on the chance of the mine panning out later on?"

"On such a small investment as that I certainly would advise the holder of the shares to keep them. He cannot

lose much by doing so, and he may make a good thing out of the stock by and by."

"Here is a memorandum of the five certificates in question, each for 1,000 shares, made out in the name of Alexander Badlam. The seller claimed to be Mr. Badlam. Should you ever learn that the stock was stolen you can communicate with Mr. Barker. Here is his card."

"I will make a note of the matter. Who bought the stock?"

"Richard Merriton."

"Tell Mr. Merriton to write to the offices of the company at Denver and have the transfer made on its books. If there is anything wrong about the transaction he will hear from the secretary of the company."

That closed the interview and Dick returned to the office and reported what he had learned to Mr. Barker.

"Are you thinking of holding on to the stock?" asked the broker.

"Yes, sir," replied Dick.

The trader shrugged his shoulders and turned to his desk. That day Dick, while out on an errand, heard three brokers talking about D. & L.

From the substance of their conversation the boy judged that they entertained a strong suspicion that there would be something doing in the stock soon.

At any rate, D. & L. advanced to 61 5-8 that day.

Dick's last errand that day was to carry a package of bonds to Mr. Littleton's office.

The lawyer received him very graciously and talked quite a little while with him.

On his return to the outer office, Dick stopped at Mr. McIntyre's desk to exchange a few words with him and then he went over to the stenographer's table.

"Good-afternoon, Miss Grant," said Dick.

"Good-afternoon, Mr. Merriton," said Nellie.

"Why don't you call me Dick? Nobody calls me Mr. Merriton. It sounds awfully odd to me."

"I suppose I could call you Dick, but in that case you mustn't call me Miss Grant. That's just as formal as calling you Mr. Merriton."

"I'd just as soon call you Nellie, if you didn't object."

"Oh, I don't object," she replied, with a coquettish glance in his face.

"Thanks. Then it shall be Dick and Nellie after this. That's understood, isn't it?"

"Yes, of course," she answered with a laugh.

"I suppose you didn't see the wallet that Mr. Littleton sent me for saving him from that crazy heir-at-law?"

"No, I did not."

"Well, it's a beaut. Here it is. I found a \$100 bill in it, too."

"Isn't it a handsome one?"

"Almost too handsome for a messenger boy to carry around. That was my lucky day, for I found \$700 in an envelope on the street about an hour after I left here."

"Is it possible!" she exclaimed, opening her pretty eyes. "Did you find out who the money belonged to?"

"No. There wasn't a bit of writing or any other clue about it. Nor it wasn't advertised, either."

"Then the money belongs to you," she said.

"Apparently it does. At any rate I took the liberty of using it as a margin on a stock deal I put through, and I made \$2,450."

"You did!" she exclaimed in astonishment. "You made as much as that?"

"I did. Now I've used part of that money in another deal, and if my calculations don't go wrong I'll make \$4,000 or \$5,000 more."

"You must be awfully smart," she said, looking at him admiringly.

"That isn't for me to say. I am making a study of the market right along, and now that I have a little capital I am trying to put my knowledge to the best use."

"I hope you will be very successful."

"Thank you. I think I ought to send you a box of candy on the strength of my first deal, if you will permit me to. May I?"

"You are very kind to suggest it. If you wish to do so I won't refuse to accept it."

"All right. Are violets your favorite flower? I see you are wearing a bunch of them. Is that a present from your best fellow?"

"No, indeed," she replied, with a blush. "I have no best fellow."

"Wouldn't you like to have one?"

"Why, what a question!" she said, looking somewhat confused.

"I thought maybe I could filch the bill till you got somebody you liked better."

Nellie flushed to her hair, but said nothing.

"We're good friends, anyway, aren't we, Nellie?" he said.

"I hope so," she replied.

"You're the nicest girl I know, and I won't even except my sister, who is one of the finest girls in the world. I hope you don't mind me telling you what I think of you, for I always say what I mean. It's a habit I have."

The girl made no reply, and kept her eyes averted.

"Well, I've got to get a move on. I'll send you the candy at the first chance I get. Good-by," he said, holding out his hand.

"Good-by," she said, giving him hers, and flashing a look in his face that made his blood flow quicker. "I hope to see you soon again."

"You will if I can find a chance to get up here," he replied.

Next day he sent her a box of the best chocolates and a big bunch of violets by an A. D. T. messenger.

Two days later the Exchange was thrown into great excitement by the sudden rise in D. & L. shares.

The stock appeared to be so scarce that there seemed to be no doubt in the minds of the brokers that it had been cornered.

A concerted bear attack on the stock failed to accomplish anything and D. & L. soared triumphantly to 75, at which figure Dick sold out his shares, clearing \$5,000.

CHAPTER VIII.

A TRICK THAT WORKED TWO WAYS.

Dick wrote to the office of the Mohawk Central Gold Mining Co., in Denver, giving a memorandum of his certificates and asking to have the stock entered in the company's books in his name.

He also asked for some information about the mine.

In due course he received a reply stating that the transfer had been made.

The secretary also spoke encouragingly about the prospects of the mine, assuring Dick that the slump in the price of the shares would only be temporary.

Dick showed the letter to his employer.

"Sounds encouraging," said Mr. Barker, "but you must accept such statements with a grain of salt. At present Mohawk Central has a very black eye. There are few sales on the Western exchanges, and none that I've heard of East. It was last quoted at 12 cents, but I doubt if you could get 6 for it on the Curb."

"I don't care," replied Dick. "I can afford to keep it indefinitely."

"I am glad to hear that your finances are in so flourishing a condition," replied the broker, with a tinge of sarcasm in his tone.

It sounded strange to him to hear a messenger boy speak so lightly about a \$300 investment that had so doubtful a future.

But then he didn't know that Dick was worth \$7,700 independent of the Mohawk Central stock.

Had someone assured him of that fact it would have been a great surprise to him.

Dick sent Nellie Grant a note telling her he had made \$5,000 out of his latest deal, and requested her to keep the fact strictly to herself.

He did not fail to send a two-pound box of candy and another bunch of violets with the note.

He also surprised Bob Browning by presenting him with a \$100 bill.

"Why, how can you afford to give me so much?" asked Bob regarding the bill with a doubtful sense of proprietorship.

"That's my business, Bob. Just put the money in your pocket and say nothing."

"You must have got hold of enough money to buy fifty shares at least of D. & L."

"If it will do you any good to know, I will tell you that I had more than fifty shares."

"How in thunder——" began Bob, but Dick choked him off.

"That will do now. Change the topic, please."

"But I'd like to know——"

"There are lots of things people would like to know that they never learn about. You've got your \$100, so choke off."

About a week later Dick heard two brokers talking about M. & N. stock.

"You won't make any mistake in buying 1,000 shares, Abe," said one.

"On what ground?" asked his friend.

"I have it on the best authority that the company has secured control of the D., B. & A. That means a monopoly of the business between Memphis and Nashville. As soon as the fact gets out on the Street there will be a rush to buy the shares before they get too high. If you want to make a good haul get busy right away—a few hours may make a heap of difference in the price of M. & N."

Dick didn't hear any more, but he was interested enough in what he heard to look M. & N. up when he got back to the office.

It was ruling around 65.

That afternoon on his way home he stopped in at the little bank and left an order for the purchase of 1,000 shares of the stock.

He had to put up \$6,500 margin.

"You are getting to be quite an operator, Merriton," said the margin clerk. "Does your boss know that you speculate?"

"That's a question I must decline to answer," replied Dick.

The clerk laughed and handed him his memorandum.

"How much do you expect to make this time?" he asked.

"As much as I can," replied Dick, walking away.

Next morning as Dick was walking down New Street with a message to a broker on Exchange Place he saw Tom Hurley and two companions come out of an office building.

Tom noticed Dick hurrying toward them and he said something to his associates in a low tone.

Taking a stout cord from his pocket he handed one end to one of his friends, who immediately stooped down near the wall of one of the buildings, while Tom and the other chap sat down on the curb.

The cord was allowed to lie across the pavement.

Dick thought the actions of the three decidedly suspicious, particularly as he had reason to know that Hurley bore him no good will.

"I wonder what game they're up to?" Dick asked himself as he rapidly drew near the three lads. "If Tom Hurley tries any larks on me I'll make him look two ways for Sunday before I let up on him."

He didn't notice the cord, but he kept his eyes skinned for trouble.

He had an idea the three boys meant to jump on him and upset him, and he prepared himself for a scrap.

They made no move of that kind as he passed between them, but Hurley and the boy against the wall suddenly raised their hands about a foot.

In a moment Dick felt himself tripped up and flying through the air.

He was as active as a cat, however, and came down on his hands and knees.

Hurley and his friends uttered a shout of derisive laughter and started to run.

The former, in his eagerness to escape the possible consequences of an encounter with Dick, forgot that there was a stairway close at hand leading down to an A. D. T. messenger's office.

The result was that he plunged head first down into the opening.

All that saved Hurley from a broken neck was the fact that the manager of the place, a man weighing about 200 pounds, was coming up the stairs at the moment.

Tom hit him squarely in the stomach, and both of them went rolling to the foot of the steps in a heap.

Hurley's neck was wrenched and his shins badly barked, while the manager had sprained one of his arms.

By that time Dick was on his feet and full of fight.

Tom's two companions had already placed a safe distance between themselves and the scene of trouble and had quit running.

They hadn't seen Hurley's header, and were wondering where he had got to.

Neither had Dick witnessed Tom's dive, but he was attracted to the head of the steps by the racket he heard down there.

Then he saw the young rascal's plight, and his anger changed to a grin of satisfaction when he saw Hurley

nursing his injured jaw and at the same time trying to escape from the grasp of the manager of the messenger office, who was about as mad as any man could well be.

Dick couldn't quite understand what had happened, but the fact that his enemy was in trouble was balm to his ruffled feelings.

The manager didn't dally long with Hurley.

He cuffed him two or three times, and finally gave him a kick that sent him flying back up the stairs, on which he landed, sprawling on all fours.

Dick was satisfied that Hurley was getting all that was coming to him so he decided not to add to the young rascal's discomfiture, as he scorned to strike any one who was not able to hold his own.

Leaving Tom to pick himself up and escape from a bad box he continued on his way rejoicing.

On his way back to the office he almost ran into Hurley, who was limping down Exchange Place, looking like a wreck.

"Hello, Tom Hurley," he chuckled, "been having a scrap with an automobile? You look all broke up."

Hurley dodged as though he thought Dick was going to hit him.

"What did you dodge for?" grinned Dick. "Did you think a safe was falling on you?"

"Go to blazes!" snarled Hurley, with a vindictive glare in his eyes.

"It doesn't seem to pay you to get gay with me," said Dick. "If you hadn't got into trouble on your own hook I'd have knocked the daylights out of you. I wouldn't advise you to work any more gags like that on me, for if you do you're liable to go to a hospital for a month."

With those parting words the young messenger walked off, quite satisfied that, for the present at least, Hurley had been punished enough.

Two days later the news came out on the Exchange about the M. & N. road having secured control of the D., B. & A. line.

That started a kind of high jinks on the floor; the brokers piling over one another in their eagerness to get hold of M. & N. shares.

Those who knew in advance what was going to happen had secured so much of the stock at the prevailing figures before the announcement that there was very little left for outsiders to fatten on.

In an hour the price of M. & N. went from 65 5-8 to 72.

It was going around 73 when Dick ordered his 1,000 shares sold, and they were snapped up in a twinkling.

After going half a point higher the price dropped back to 70 under heavy selling orders.

Dick, however, took no further interest in the fate of the stock after he was out of the running, and he waited for his statement to confirm his own estimate of a profit of \$8,000.

CHAPTER IX.

DICK REFUSES A FLATTERING OFFER FOR HIS MOHAWK CENTRAL MINING SHARES.

When Dick got his check from the little bank he found he was worth \$15,600.

During the day he turned the check in to the bank, got \$600 cash and a certificate of deposit for the balance.

The \$600 he took home and handed over to his mother, telling her that he had made some more money in the stock market.

Of course she was delighted to hear that had been lucky again, and the \$600 looked like a small fortune to her.

A month passed away and Dick, while attending faithfully to his duties as messenger in Mr. Barker's office, kept a sharp watch also on the stock market.

One Saturday afternoon after business was over for the week and he had been paid off, he went over to the King Building to meet Bob, who got off at half-past one.

They walked down to the Hanover Square station of the elevated railroad and took a Third Avenue train for Harlem.

Two well-dressed men entered the car behind them and took seats next to Dick.

One of them the boy recognized as a well-known broker.

Both boys had early editions of afternoon papers and were soon reading them.

Presently Dick heard the broker say to his companion: "Did you buy H. & O., as I told you to?"

He didn't catch the other gentleman's reply, but he heard the broker say:

"You'd better act on my tip right away, for you won't get such another chance to double your money in a hurry. A week from to-day the stock will be 15 points higher as sure as you're sitting in that seat. I've got my information from headquarters, and you can rely on the fact that it's genuine. You haven't any time to lose, Morris, if you want to be one of the lucky winners, for the news of the consolidation will be public property between this and Wednesday. I'm in this thing to the extent of 10,000 shares, and if I could have handled any more I should have bought them. I expect to make a cool \$150,000. If you are wise you'll put every cent you can raise by hook or by crook into H. & O. with as little delay as possible."

The other gentleman drew an old letter from his pocket and began to make figures on the back of it.

"Well, if it continues to rule around 70 on Monday I'll be able to buy 3,000 shares, at any rate," he said. "And possibly I may be able to put up enough collateral to get out another 500 on Tuesday."

"You can safely hold on for 85," said the broker. "When it reaches that price sell out. It will probably go higher, but I would not advise you to run the risk of an unexpected slump because there was more profit in sight. Close out at 85."

The men talked a while longer about H. & O. and then branched off on another subject.

They left the car at the Fifty-ninth Street station, and Dick nudged Bob's arm.

"Hello, what is it?" asked Browning.

"I've caught on to a pointer," replied Dick, in a low tone.

"A pointer! What kind of one?"

"A stock pointer, of course."

"How?"

"You saw those two gentlemen who just got out, didn't you?"

"No, I didn't notice them. What about them?"

"One is a broker. I think his name is Steinfeldt. The other is a close friend of his. I heard the broker tell his friend that if he wanted to get in on a sure winner he must buy H. & O. right away."

"He said that, did he?"

"Yes, and a whole lot more that convinced me that H. & O. is well worth going the whole hog on."

"Then you're going to put your money into it, eh?"

"I am, and I advise you to do the same. The stock is going at 70 now. You've cash enough to put up as margin on 15 shares. The broker says it will surely go to 85. There's a chance for you to make \$200 as easy as if you picked it up on the street."

"I couldn't get away from my job to keep track of a stock deal," replied Bob.

Let me have your money between this and Monday morning, and I'll attend to it for you. I'll work it in connection with my own deal."

"All right," replied Bob, promptly. "I'll fetch the cash around to your house to-morrow afternoon. I should be only too happy to make \$200, bet your boots."

True to his promise, Bob brought the money to Dick on the following day, and at the first chance he got Monday, the young messenger invested nearly all his funds in 2,000 shares of the stock for his friend Bob.

That afternoon when he returned to the office about three after carrying the day's deposits to the bank, he found a well-dressed man, with a sunburned countenance, waiting in the office.

"Are you Richard Merriton?" the stranger inquired, sizing the boy up with some curiosity.

"That's my name," replied Dick.

"I believe you bought a block of Mohawk Central mining stock from Alexander Badlam a few weeks ago?"

"I did."

"Do you want to sell it?"

"I am not particularly anxious to do so," replied Dick.

"I am looking around for some of it, and would give 15 cents a share."

"Did Mr. Badlam send you to me?"

"No. I called to see the secretary of the company and I got your address from him, as I was coming East, and so I dropped in to see if you wanted to sell the shares."

"I should think you could have gotten all you wanted out West."

"So I could, but I believed I could buy it cheaper in New York, as there seems to be no market for it here."

"The figure you offer me is the latest quotation on the Goldfield Exchange. This is not trying to buy it cheaper."

"Then it has dropped since I reached this town?"

"I have seen no higher quotation than 15 since the stock came into my possession. We get the Western market reports in this office right from the Mining Exchange. I have been looking to see it go to 20."

"Mining shares are very uncertain things to hold for a rise," said the stranger.

"If you are willing to give 15 cents I guess I can afford to keep the stock."

"The stock isn't really worth 15 cents a share, but for reasons that I do not care to explain it will pay me to give that for it. You probably would not soon be able to get such another chance to sell your shares at a profit."

"How do you know but I gave more than 15 cents for the stock?"

"I didn't suppose you gave more than 10 cents at the outside, because that was what it was selling at about the time the transfer was made on the company's books."

"Well, I won't sell at 15 cents," replied Dick, decidedly.

"What do you want for it?"

"I haven't thought about a price."

"Couldn't you set a figure?"

The man's persistency aroused Dick's suspicions that perhaps some valuable discovery had come to light in the mine, and that this stranger had been sent East to pick up the stock that was known to be held in New York City and vicinity.

"No," replied Dick. "Mohawk Central once sold for 90 cents. It may go to that again."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed the man, impatiently. "The mine has ceased to be a profitable producer, and will hardly go above 25 cents, if it should get that high."

"Will you give 25 cents?" asked Dick, suddenly.

"No, but I'll tell you what I will do, I'll give you 20."

"I don't care to sell the stock."

"Are you holding out for 25?"

"I am holding out for a strike in the mine, and the chance of it going to \$1 at least."

The stranger looked disgusted.

"You'll be disappointed," he said, emphatically.

"If I am that will be my own funeral. I got the stock cheap and can afford to hold on to it indefinitely."

"Then you won't accept my offer?"

Dick shook his head.

"Will you take 25 cents a share?"

"No, sir. I won't take 50 cents."

"Then we can't do business?" said the stranger, who seemed loath to go.

"Not unless you're willing to pay \$1 a share, and then I might consider your offer."

"Young man, when you turn down 25 cents you are turning down a good thing."

"Perhaps, but I can't understand why you are willing to pay 25 cents for stock that you ought to be able to get on the Curb to-morrow morning for half that—that is, if there is any to be got."

The stranger looked annoyed at Dick's pertinent remark and he hastened to say that he had been looking around for the stock for several days without finding anybody who had any for sale.

"You knew, however, all the time that I had 5,000 shares, didn't you?"

"Yes."

"Then it's a wonder you didn't look me up at first."

"I intended to, but mislaid your address."

Dick had an idea that the visitor hadn't told the exact truth.

"Well, I'm sorry, but I have decided to hold on to my stock."

"You won't sell for 25 cents?"

"No."

"I'll give you 30."

"It's no inducement," replied the boy, now fully satisfied that there was something in the wind about Mohawk Central that was not generally known.

"There's my name and address. I shall be at the Astor House until next Thursday. If you should change your mind before then let me know."

"I will," replied Dick.

The stranger then wished him good day and took his departure.

CHAPTER X.

DICK MAKES A BIG HAUL.

When Dick reached home he told his father about the stranger who had called at the office that afternoon and offered him 30 cents a share for his Mohawk Central stock.

"Thirty cents!" said his father. "That's quite an advance over what you paid for it. Did you accept his offer?"

"I did not."

"Then the price has gone up, has it? I have not heard you mention anything about the stock since you bought it."

"It has gone up to 15 on the Goldfield Exchange, but I couldn't get that for it on the Curb if I wanted to sell it."

"Then why did you refuse 30 for it from that man? Didn't he have the cash to back his offer?"

"I didn't ask him whether he had the money or not, but I suppose he wouldn't have made the offer if he wasn't prepared to pay for it if I took him up. I didn't accept his offer because if the stock is worth 30 to him I guess it's worth 30 to me. In other words, father, it is my opinion that there has been a new lead discovered in that mine the news of which may send the price to 50 or over. Otherwise, why should he be willing to pay double the present market value for it? It's my opinion he has been quietly buying up all the shares he can find in the hands of the mining brokers at whatever figure he could get it for, and finally he called on me to get the 5,000 shares he learned I bought of Mr. Badlam."

"You may be right, Dick," said his father, reflectively.

"Whether I'm right or not I'm willing to take a chance on it. The stock only cost me \$300, so I can easily afford to hold on to it as long as I choose. I can't lose more than the \$300, while I stand to win several times that amount if my surmise is correct."

Next morning Dick told Mr. Barker about the stranger and his offer of 30 cents a share for Mohawk Central.

"Do you mean to say that he made you a bona fide offer of 30 cents for that stock?"

"So I took it to be."

The broker looked the mine up on the previous day's Goldfield report.

"That's singular. There was a sale of 6,500 shares on the Goldfield Exchange yesterday at 15 cents. Did you take him up?"

"No, sir."

"Why not?" asked the trader, in surprise.

"Because I believe it is worth more than 30."

"How can it be when the market price is 15?"

"I have an idea that the market price is likely to be nearer 50 than 15 in a short time."

"Upon my word, young man, you are developing an extraordinary foreknowledge of the value of mining stock," said Mr. Barker, sarcastically. "Are you gifted with second sight?"

"No, sir, but I believe I can see through a millstone when there's a hole in it."

"Indeed! Perhaps you will tell me on what ground you base your idea that Mohawk Central, a comparatively dead security, is likely to advance in price to 50?"

"Well, sir, that gentleman didn't look at all crazy, and only a crazy man would have offered double the market value for a stock unless he had some inside information which warranted him in giving such a figure. It is my opinion that either the lost lead or a new vein of good-paying ore has been discovered, and that the people aware of the fact are trying to buy in all the stock that's out at as low a figure as they can get it before they let the information get out. I paid so little for those shares that I am going to see the thing through. At the outside I can't lose more than \$300."

"Your deduction is very clever, young man, and may be correct, but a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. Thirty cents a share means a profit of \$1,250 on your investment, which is a very handsome profit, and, I may add, a very handsome sum for a messenger boy to be worth."

"I've known messenger boys to be worth more than that, sir."

"Have you, indeed? You are probably ambitious to become one of the wealthy ones, eh?" said the broker, ironically.

"Yes, sir. I think money is a good thing to have."

"If you think so you ought to have accepted that man's offer of \$1,500 for your Mohawk Central stock."

"Then you think I acted foolishly in refusing to sell at 30?"

"If the man really meant business, I do."

"But how do you account for him making such a liberal offer?"

"It is quite possible he is acting for parties who wish to secure a majority of the stock of the company for the purpose of getting control of the mine. The 5,000 shares you own might come near filling the bill, and consequently it would be to the interest of his principals to pay you double the value of the stock in order to get it. Such instances frequently occur."

"Well, I have his name and address. He told me to send him word if I changed my mind. I'll consider the matter between this and next Thursday."

Dick left the room, but though he thought the matter over before he was sent out on his first errand, he did not think he was likely to change his mind.

That afternoon H. & O. advanced two points, and after he got off he went around to the King Building and told Bob that his stock was worth \$30 more than he had paid for it.

"That's fine," replied Browning. "And how much more is your stock worth?"

"The same as yours, of course, \$2 a share."

"I know, but I meant altogether."

"That's one of my business secrets. If I told you how much more I'm worth to-day than I was yesterday morning you might have a fit, and that wouldn't do at all," chuckled Dick.

"One would think you had a big bunch of the stock from the way you talk. I don't believe you've got over 300 shares at the outside."

"Don't you, Bob. You have a right to your opinion, at any rate."

"I don't see any reason why you shouldn't tell me just how many shares you have got," said Bob, in an aggrieved tone.

"Supposing I told you I had 2,000 shares, would you believe me?"

"Don't talk nonsense. If you told me that you had 500 I'd take your word for it, though it would be pretty hard to swallow."

"All right, Bob, we'll let it go at that," laughed Dick, and a few minutes later he left the elevator and started for home.

Next day was Wednesday, and Dick looked for something to come out about H. & O.

He was not disappointed.

On his second visit to the Exchange about noon the announcement of the consolidation of another road with H. & O. was made, and the chairman had hardly finished reading the communication which had been sent him than the brokers made a rush for the H. & O. standard, where a big broker had been bidding for the stock at intervals since the Exchange opened.

While Dick stood at the railing his worldly wealth increased at the rate of \$2,000 at a clip for several minutes.

When he saw 77 posted up on the blackboard, which indicated that he had doubled the amount he had at stake, he grabbed a messenger alongside of him and began to waltz around the space behind the railing as though he were crazy.

"Hey! Dern you, leave me alone!" cried a familiar voice, and then he woke up to the fact that he had hold of Tom Hurley.

Dick dropped him like a hot coal and came back to earth.

The broker he was waiting for came up to the railing at that moment and he handed the note to him that he had brought.

The trader read it and told him there was no answer, so Dick hurried back to his own office, wondering if H. & O. would go up to 85 that day.

It went to 83.

On his way home he stopped in at the bank and told the clerk to instruct their representative to sell out his 2,000 shares and Browning's 15 next morning at 85.

The stock reached that price inside of fifteen minutes after the Exchange opened, and when Dick reached the messengers' entrance at a quarter to eleven with a note to Mr. Barker's representative it was going at 88.

Dick's profit on the deal footed up \$29,250, making him worth close on to \$45,000, and it is little wonder if he felt like a fighting cock.

As for Bob Browning, he was in the seventh heaven of delight when Dick handed him the sum of \$315, representing a profit of \$205.

CHAPTER XI.

DICK GOES INTO BUSINESS ON HIS OWN ACCOUNT.

"Say, pop," said Dick that evening at the supper table, "I'll bet you can't guess how much I'm worth at this moment."

"You were worth \$14,000 something over a month ago."

"That's right," replied Dick.

"Have you been working another successful deal?" asked his father, with not a little interest in his tones, while Dick's mother and sister looked at him with an air of expectation.

The family had come to regard Dick as an uncommonly smart boy, and one who was pretty sure to succeed in life.

The fact that he had made \$15,000 that year so far out of the \$700 he found in the blue envelope made him the most important factor in the little household.

They had gotten over feeling surprised at anything he might accomplish.

If his 5,000 shares of mining stock had suddenly become worth \$50,000 they would not have been greatly astonished, for he had told so many stories about people getting rich on mining stock that they half expected he would make a fortune out of his.

"Yes, father. I got hold of a valuable pointer last Saturday. I backed it to the extent of \$14,000. I bought it at 70 on Monday morning and yesterday morning I sold it at 85, clearing a little over \$29,000, consequently I'm worth \$44,250."

The family looked at Dick in surprised silence.

"I think I've worked long enough as a messenger boy, good folks," he went on, "so I've decided to resign my job and go into business on my own hook. I think 'Richard Merriton, Broker,' would look very well on a frosted glass door. At any rate, I'm going to have it put on one. In the meantime I think it will be well for mother to look for a better flat, in a more stylish neighborhood. I am able to support the family now in good shape, and sis needn't work any more unless she wants to."

Dick's little speech created considerable excitement at the supper table, and after the family realized that the young man of the house meant business, and was in position to make his words good, they began to make their plans for the immediate future.

Dick gave Mr. Barker two weeks' notice of his intention to leave.

The broker was surprised and offered to raise his wages if he would stay, but the boy declined his offer with thanks.

Dick drew all his money from the little bank on presenting his check, hired a box in a safe deposit vault and stowed it there for safe-keeping.

During his last week's stay with Mr. Barker he broke in the new messenger, who was a distant relative of the trader, and had come from the country to begin life in New York.

On the following Monday he looked around for a small office, and found one in a big Wall Street building next door to the King office building where Browning was employed.

He had not told Bob anything about the change he was contemplating, as he wanted to give him a big surprise.

He found he couldn't get the office he had picked out without getting somebody to guarantee the rent.

"What's the matter with me paying you the five months' rent up to May 1 in advance?" he said to the agent of the building.

"Well, that's something, of course, but still I must have a good reference, anyway."

"I can refer you to Mr. Samuel Littleton, a lawyer, in the Mills Building."

"Very well. I'll call on Mr. Littleton some time to-day. I'll hold the office until to-morrow morning at ten o'clock."

Dick was satisfied with this arrangement, and he decided to see Mr. Littleton right away and let him know how he was fixed and what he wanted the office for.

Accordingly he started for the Mills Building.

He found the lawyer in and was immediately admitted to his private room.

"Good-morning, Mr. Littleton," he said.

"Good-morning, Merriton," said the lawyer, shaking hands with him. "Take a seat."

"Mr. Littleton, I have taken the liberty of giving you as my reference," said Dick. "I want to hire an office in the Globe Building and the agent said it would be necessary to furnish reference as to my desirability as a tenant, so I gave him your name and he said he would call on you some time to-day."

"Have you left Mr. Barker?" asked the lawyer, evidently surprised.

"Yes, sir."

"And may I ask what you intend to do with an office?"

"Open up as a broker, sir," replied Dick coolly.

"As a broker?"

"Yes, sir."

The lawyer was clearly a bit staggered.

"Are you really in earnest, Merriton?"

"I am, sir."

"Did you have any trouble with Mr. Barker?"

"No, sir. He offered to raise my salary if I'd stay, but I didn't care to."

"You left on your own accord, then?"

"Yes, sir."

"With the view of opening an office yourself?"

"Yes, sir."

The lawyer drummed on his desk and regarded Dick rather quizzically.

"You are rather young and, I should think, inexperienced to branch out in this way, don't you think?" asked the lawyer, as considerately as he could. "Then it takes quite a little capital to run the business."

"I may be young, but I'm ambitious to make a start in life. Perhaps I'm not so inexperienced as you may think. As to capital, I've nearly \$50,000 which I made myself out of the stock market in the last few months."

"You have a capital of nearly \$50,000?" ejaculated the lawyer.

"Yes, sir. If you have the time to listen I'll tell you how I got my start, and how I made the money."

Mr. Littleton nodded, and Dick told him how he had found the \$700 in the envelope on the same afternoon he had saved the lawyer from being strangled by the crazy heir-at-law; what he had done with it, and the particulars of his three subsequent deals, the last of which had recently panned him out \$20,000.

"If I can do as well as that under a messenger's handicap, I think I can do better now that I have both time and a good capital at my disposal," he concluded. "At any rate, I'm going to try. Of course, I hardly expect to get customers right away, but while speculating for myself I'm going to make myself known, so that when business does begin to come my way I won't be such a new thing."

Dick and Mr. Littleton had quite a lengthy conversation, and when the boy rose to go the lawyer promised to put in a good word for him to the agent.

Of course Dick wouldn't think of leaving the office without having a talk with Nellie Grant.

He astonished her with his announcement that he was about to open up as a Wall Street broker, and said he would expect her to give him a call as soon as he had his office in a shape to receive visitors.

She laughingly assured him that she would not fail to take advantage of his invitation.

"Come around Saturday. You get off about noon, I believe. My sister has promised to call about that time, too. I'll introduce you to her. She's very anxious to meet you. Then we'll go out and have lunch together."

Dick wrote the floor and number of the room he already considered as good as his, and gave her the paper.

"You won't disappoint me, will you?" he said earnestly.

"I shan't consider that I'm fairly launched in business until you have christened the office by your presence. I look upon you as my mascot, Nellie, so you mustn't go back on me."

"I will come unless something should prevent me doing so," she replied, with a smile.

"Thank you. I will look for you."

Then he left the office and went up on Nassau street to see a dealer who made a specialty in office furnishings.

Next morning he called on the agent of the Globe Building promptly at ten.

He was told that the office was his, and that he need only pay one month's rent in advance, which he did and got his receipt and the key of the office.

He lost no time in making his arrangements about furnishing it with a desk, a safe, a rug, some water-color pictures, and such other articles as he would require.

He left an order for printing and stationery at a house on Broad street, and then went to see about having a ticker installed and a telephone put in.

On Wednesday afternoon a painter put his name on the door, with the words "Stocks and Bonds" underneath, and Dick regarded the sign with considerable satisfaction.

On Thursday he wrote an advertisement and paid for its continuous insertion in two of the Wall Street dailies.

He also put a similar advertisement in an evening newspaper that was largely read by people interested in Wall Street.

On Friday morning he received his printing, books and stationery, and now considered that if any business came his way he was ready to grapple with it, for he had made an arrangement with a young broker he knew, who was a member of the Stock Exchange, to put through any orders that he secured, and allow him a part of the commission.

That afternoon he walked next door into the King Building and waited for Bob's elevator.

"Hello, Dick," said Bob. "Bound for the sixth floor, as usual?"

"Not this time. I'm just going up for the ride. I've got something to tell you."

"What is it? Another tip?"

"No. Do you think you can stand a surprise without getting an attack of heart failure?"

"What kind of a surprise are you going to spring on me?"

"I want you to meet me at Room 416, in the Globe Building, next door, to-morrow when you get off. Will you?"

"Sure, I will. Whose office is it?"

"You'll see when you get there. Write the number on your cuff so you won't forget it."

Bob did so, and soon after the elevator touched the ground floor again and Dick got out and left the building.

Next day at half-past twelve Edith Merriton, Dick's sister, appeared at her brother's office.

"What a nice, cozy little place you have here, Dick!" she exclaimed enthusiastically. "And you appear to be all ready for business, too."

"Sure thing. I call this my sheep-shearing den. I've got a nice, sharp pair of shears in my desk for the first innocent lamb that wanders in here."

"I don't quite understand you."

"Don't you know that the lambs come to Wall Street to gamble—b-l-e, not b-o-l. See the point?"

Edith laughed.

"When a lamb gambles he risks his fleece. All the brokers keep a pair of sharp shears to relieve them of their wool. Sometimes the brokers use the shears on one another, when they can. The sharper the shears, or the broker, the more wool gets into his safe. I expect to fill that safe full in the course of time."

"What a funny boy you are," laughed his sister. "May I see your shears?"

"No. We never exhibit them till we need them in our business."

"Dicky, dear, you're a big fraud."

Just then the door opened and in walked Nellie Grant.

Dick sprang up and ran over to welcome her.

He brought her over to the window and introduced her to his sister.

The girls took an immediate fancy to each other, and were soon chatting together like old friends, much to Dick's satisfaction.

Suddenly Dick heard an exclamation outside in the corridor, then the door opened and Bob walked in.

"Suffering Jupiter! What does this mean? 'Richard Merriton, Stocks and Bonds.' Have you gone into business for yourself?"

"I have," replied Dick.

"Well, if you haven't a nerve! When did you leave Barker?"

"Last Saturday."

"The Dickens! And you never told me anything about it!"

"I wanted to surprise you."

"You have, or I'm a liar."

"Come over and I'll introduce you to the young lady who's talking to Edith."

The four were soon talking together.

"Well, it's time we went out to lunch," said the young broker at length. "Bob, you will do the honors for my sister, while Miss Grant, I guess, will accept my escort. This lunch is on me as a sort of christening of my new office, so I hope you'll all do justice to it."

"Bet your life I'll hold my end up," chuckled Bob.

Dick piloted the way to a nice restaurant in Beaver street, and when they were seated at one of the tables he ordered the best spread the house could produce.

As the girls were both unusually pretty and vivacious, the attracted considerable attention, and many of the gentlemen

at the tables rather envied Dick and Bob because they were enjoying the society of such charming companions.

The young people spent an hour in the restaurant, and then Dick paid the bill with the air of a capitalist.

They walked up as far as the Brooklyn Bridge together, where they parted, Dick escorting Nellie to her home in Brooklyn and Bob taking Edith up to Harlem.

CHAPTER XII.

DICK'S FIRST CUSTOMER.

Dick appeared at his office at half-past nine Monday morning, gazed complacently at his name on the frosted glass pane, unlocked the door and entered.

"It's fine to be your own boss. No more hustling about the district with notes to this broker or that, breaking your neck trying to make time when your employer is in a particular sweat to get a communication delivered. Now, if I have a deal on I can watch it. I can keep my eye on the market all the time. I don't see how I ever managed to put my deals through so well. It must have been that luck ran my way."

On the floor lay a copy of each of the Wall Street dailies in which Dick had his advertisement running.

He picked them up, and, seating himself at his desk, began to read the latest financial and general Wall Street intelligence.

At half-past ten he went over to the visitors' gallery of the Exchange, where he remained watching the brokers and the trend of the market till he felt hungry, when he went to lunch.

That was about the way he passed his time for the next three or four days.

Nobody disturbed him when he was in the office, and his account books remained untouched in his safe.

Occasionally he unlocked the inner door of the safe to take a look at the sum of \$4,000 that he kept there in case something turned up that would call for the expenditure of such a sum.

The balance of his funds remained in the safe deposit vault.

When he returned to his office Friday afternoon he found a letter on the floor where the letter carrier had shoved it through the mail slit in the door.

It bore the postmark of Vineland, New Jersey.

He opened it and found the following note in a woman's handwriting:

"208 Grove street, Vineland, N. J."

"Richard Merriton, Broker:

"Dear Sir—I saw your advertisement in the 'Evening Lamp-post.' I own some D. & G. stock that I would like to have you sell for me. At present it is in the possession of Withers & Co., stock brokers, of the King Building, who are holding it against my will because my step-father has requested them to do so. But I will be of legal age to-morrow and intend to come to New York and demand it of them. I have learned that my step-father, Mr. Peck, intends to forestall me through a court order. I will therefore call at your office by eleven in the morning, and will ask you to accompany me to the office of Withers & Co., where I will make a demand for the stock in your presence. My step-father's authority over me will cease at midnight to-night, so that Withers & Co. will have no right to hold the stock from me after that hour. Yours respectfully,

"ANNIE BURNSIDE."

"This seems to be my first customer, and from the tenor of her note it looks as if my business might have a strenuous opening," mused Dick, as he read the note over again. "So Withers & Co. are retaining her property against her will? Well, it is lucky she will be of age to-morrow, or she might not be able to get it. I wonder what the trouble is between her and her step-father? If he reaches Withers & Co. with a court order before she can make her demand that will probably tie the stock up until the judge decides upon her rights. Now, I might get ahead of him and his court order if she could show that she had sold that stock before the order was signed by the judge. Her right to sell the stock after twelve to-night would be perfectly legal. If the sale is delayed until after ten to-morrow it may lead to complications that would deprive her of her rights for some time, though ultimately she would be bound to recover the stock if it really belongs to her. How can I manage to take time

by the forelock? By taking an early train to Vineland, calling on her at her home and getting a bill of sale of the stock from her and an order on Withers & Co. for its delivery to me as the purchaser? Mr. Withers might refuse to let me have it because he knows me as Mr. Barker's messenger. However, I'm no longer Mr. Barker's messenger, but a regular broker myself. I have the right to buy any stock that I can pay for. D. & G is gilt-edged stock, and I have noticed that it is going up. It would be safe enough for me to buy her shares at the market. Or I could make a pretended sale with her, giving her, say ten per cent. down, and then send her the balance after I had sold it later on. At any rate, I'd like to help Miss Burnside out of her scrape, and I'll do it if I can."

Dick gave the subject his attention that afternoon and decided to go to Vineland early next morning.

He found he could get there at half-past eight, about an hour before the young lady intended to take a train for New York.

He could transact the business within that time and she could come to the city with him afterward.

Accordingly, he left home at six next morning, got a hasty breakfast down-town and caught the 7:20 train for Philadelphia, which stopped at Vineland.

He rang the bell at 208 Grove street at a quarter to nine, and asked the maid who came to the door to take his name to Miss Burnside.

He was shown into a cozy little parlor and presently a pretty young lady came into the room.

She held Dick's card in her hand and was surprised to see a good-looking boy instead of a full-grown man whom she expected to meet.

"Miss Burnside?" said the young broker interrogatively.

"Yes. I presume Mr. Merriton sent you to see me?" she said, sitting in a chair close to her visitor.

"I am Richard Merriton, broker, Miss Burnside."

She received his reply in some astonishment.

"Are you really the broker I wrote to?" she asked, in a doubtful tone.

"Yes, Miss Burnside, and after reading your letter I decided that it would be to your interest to see you as early as possible regarding the stock in question."

"Aren't you rather young to be a broker?" she asked in a hesitating tone.

"Perhaps I look younger than I really am," replied Dick diplomatically, for he knew that his mission would be a failure unless he could inspire the young lady with some confidence in his business ability, "but I assure you that I can do as well to assist you out of your trouble as though I had a full set of whiskers. I am acquainted with the firm of Withers & Co. that you mentioned in your letter, Miss Burnside."

"Are you, indeed?" she replied, brightening up.

"Yes. My object in coming to see you before you called on me was to propose a plan for side-tracking that court order which you anticipate that your step-father intends to get out. You could not reach my office before eleven o'clock. Mr. Peck, by taking the eight o'clock train for New York, would have time to get the order and serve it on Withers & Co. before you made your demand on the firm for the stock. In this way your property would come into the custody of the court, and you would probably be put to some expense, as well as loss of time, before you could establish your rights to the securities."

"Mr. Peck did go to New York by the eight o'clock train," said the young lady, looking uneasy.

"Then you may depend on it that he went to secure that order. Tell me just what the trouble is about the stock, and then I will suggest a plan for checkmating your step-father."

Miss Burnside said that her mother had died nearly a year since, leaving her 200 shares of D. & G. preferred stock, valued at about \$80 a share.

Her step-father had tried in various ways to get possession of the securities, on the ground that being under age she had no right to retain the certificates herself.

She had refused to turn them over to him, and kept them hid where he couldn't find them.

A few days since, being close on her eighteenth birthday, she had carried the stock to New York and placed it in the hands of Withers & Co. to dispose of.

Mr. Withers advised her that the price was likely to go up inside of a week, and that she had better not sell it until it advanced a few points.

She agreed to this and a few days later she received a letter from the brokers stating that her step-father, Mr.

Peck, had visited their office and made a demand on them for the stock, stating that, as she was under age and subject to his authority, the securities could not be sold without his permission.

Miss Burnside said she immediately wrote Withers & Co. to return the stock to her by registered mail, but this they refused to do on the ground that Mr. Peck had threatened to hold them responsible if they gave up the securities before he could institute legal proceedings to get possession of the stock.

"The stock actually belongs to you, Miss Burnside?" said Dick.

"It does," she replied.

"And you are eighteen years old to-day?"

"Yes, since ten minutes after midnight."

"Very good. You have a legal right to sell it. Now, the plan I propose, if you feel that you can trust me, is to give me a bill of sale of that stock, with an order on Withers & Co. for the shares, signed in the presence of a witness in order to fix the hour of the sale. Then you can accompany me to New York and remain in my office, which is in the Globe Building, next door to the King Building, where Withers & Co. have their office, while made a demand on Mr. Withers for the certificates. I expect to bring them back with me, and then I'll advance you whatever money you want pending the actual sale of the stock, say in a few days, when it reaches a higher figure."

"Do you think you can get the shares for me that way, Mr. Merriton?" she asked.

"I can't guarantee to, but there is more chance of my doing it that way than any other," replied Dick.

"I am sure I can trust you, Mr. Merriton," said the young lady. "I will agree to your plan."

"Very well. If you get me paper and writing materials I will draw up the bill of sale at the current value of the shares, and also the order for the stock on Withers & Co., and you can sign them in the presence of the girl who let me in."

This was carried out, and then they had just time for Miss Burnside to get ready and accompany Dick to the station, where they caught the 9:30 train for New York.

CHAPTER XIII.

DICK SECURES THE D. & G. STOCK.

Dick found Miss Burnside a very interesting and intelligent young lady, and they got very well acquainted on the train to New York.

He escorted her to his office, which they reached about eleven o'clock.

"Now I will run next door and try to get possession of your stock," said the young broker.

He handed her a morning newspaper to read and then left.

Entering the King Building, he caught Bob's elevator.

"Hello, old man," exclaimed Browning. "Where to now?"

"Withers & Co., sixth floor. I'm on a rather strenuous job, but I expect to pull out if I have to break a leg."

"How's that?" asked Bob curiously, as he slammed the door and started upward.

"It would take too long to tell you. Just keep watch for me every time you go down. If you see me coming hot-foot let me aboard and keep anybody else out if you can."

"Why, what are you up to?"

"Business, Bob, but it's rather ticklish. Here we are."

Bob stopped the elevator, opened the door and Dick stepped out on the sixth floor.

The office of Withers & Co. was only a few feet away, and the young broker made straight for it.

He was well known to the office boy, who greeted him warmly.

"I see you've left Barker," he said.

"Yes."

"Who are you working for now?"

"Myself."

"Yourself!" ejaculated the office boy, astonished.

"Yes. Is Mr. Withers in?"

"He is, but he's engaged."

"Who with, some broker?"

"No, with a gentleman by the name of Peck."

"Peck, eh? That settles it; I'm going in."

"Oh, I say, you can't do that," remonstrated the office boy.

"Can't I? Well, just you watch me," and Dick brushed past him and walked into the private room.

"Mr. Withers," he said, walking up to the desk.

"Merriton!" exclaimed the broker in surprise, for he knew Dick had severed his connection with Broker Barker.

"Yes, sir. I've got an order on you."

"An order?"

"Yes, sir, and as I'm in a great hurry I took the liberty of coming right in."

"Well, where's your order?"

"Here it is, and there is my business card."

"Your what?" cried the broker, looking at the card. "Richard Merriton, Stocks and Bonds, Room 416 Globe Building." Well, upon my word, this is rich," and he began to laugh heartily. "So you're a broker now, are you?"

"Yes, sir. That's my business," replied Dick, with some dignity.

"Well, what can I do for you?"

"Read that order, please. It is from a customer of mine."

"A customer of yours, eh?" grinned the broker, immensely tickled at the idea of the boy, who was so recently a messenger, having a customer.

But a single glance at the order caused an immediate change in his countenance.

He passed the paper to a tall, well-dressed man who sat alongside his desk, and whom Dick judged to be Mr. Peck, Miss Burnside's step-father.

When Dick entered the room he had seen Mr. Peck take an oblong wallet from his pocket, pick up two certificates of stock, which bore the name of the D. & G. railroad on the back, and place them in it, but he did not immediately return the wallet to his pocket, as he seemed to be waiting for something else from Mr. Withers.

When Mr. Peck read the order he got very red in the face.

"How did you get this order?" he demanded harshly.

"I received it this morning from Miss Annie Burnside when I purchased the 200 shares of stock from her," replied Dick coolly.

"You purchased the 200 shares of stock?" snorted the man sneeringly. "Why, you're only a boy."

"What has that got to do with it?"

"Everything. That stock is worth at the market price about \$10,000. Where would you get that amount of money to pay for it?"

"That's my business, sir. I have money enough to buy 500 shares of D. & G. if I wanted to buy it."

"Tell that to the marines, young man. However, that has no bearing on the case. My step-daughter has no right to sell that stock to anybody. Here is a court order giving me possession of it as her guardian."

"When did the judge sign that order?"

"This morning."

"At what hour?"

"About twenty minutes past ten," replied the man ungraciously.

"The order is valueless, then," replied Dick triumphantly.

"How is it?"

"Because the stock in question was my property at that time, and the court had no jurisdiction over it. I bought the shares at nine o'clock this morning and I've got a bill of sale, attested by a witness, showing that I purchased them at that hour. You will therefore hand them over to me at once. If you refuse I will have you arrested for withholding property that belongs to me."

"I am sorry," chuckled the trader, "but the certificates, in pursuance to the order of Judge French, which I am bound to recognize, have passed out of my possession."

"Mr. Peck, since you have the stock I request that you will hand it over to me," said Dick, turning to Miss Burnside's step-father.

"I'd like to see myself doing so," he answered, laying his hand on the wallet.

"Then you refuse to hand it over to me?" said the young broker.

"I do, most decidedly."

"Very well, then I'll have to take it whether you like it or not."

With these words Dick snatched the wallet from under Mr. Peck's hand and started for the door.

"Here, you young rascal, give me back my pocket-book!" cried the man, springing to his feet and making a reach for the young broker.

Dick paid no attention to him, but kept on through the door, and thence to the door of the corridor.

Mr. Peck sprang after him with Mr. Withers at his heels. At that moment Bob was coming down in his elevator.

He heard the racket, saw his friend coming toward the shaft like a deer and divined that something was up, as Dick had intimated to him there was likely to be.

He stopped the cage at once and threw open the door so that Dick could jump in, when it was his intention to slam the door in the face of his pursuers, although such an act would most probably have resulted in his immediate discharge.

An accident, however, aided the escape of the young broker, and saved Bob from possible trouble.

As the boy ran toward the waiting elevator Peck, who was in advance, reaching out his arms to detain him, lost his balance and pitched forward.

His head struck the corner of the elevator shaft and he rolled over insensible.

CHAPTER XIV.

DICK COMES OUT AHEAD.

Dick sprang into the elevator, slam! went the door, and down shot the cage.

"What was the trouble, Dick?" asked Bob, in some excitement.

As he glanced at the wallet containing the stock it suddenly occurred to him that he had taken more from Mr. Peck than he had a right to.

Dick opened the flap, took out the two certificates, which he thrust into an inner pocket of his jacket, and then held out the wallet to Bob.

"Return this to Mr. Withers on your up-trip. It belongs to a Mr. Henry Peck. All I took it for was to get possession of 200 shares of D. & G. stock which belong to a customer of mine."

"I'll do it," answered Bob, as the elevator reached the ground floor.

He opened the door and Dick darted for the street entrance.

Running into the Globe Building, he took an elevator for the floor where his office was.

He found Miss Burnside patiently awaiting his return.

"I've got the certificates," he said, holding them up; "but I had the deuce of a time getting hold of them."

"Have you?" she said, clapping her hands. "I'm so glad!"

"Your step-father, Mr. Peck, was in Withers & Co.'s office when I got there."

"Was he?" she exclaimed.

"He had an order signed by Judge French to get the certificates from Mr. Withers, and the broker had handed him the stock just before I entered the room."

"Then how did you manage to get it?" she asked, with great interest.

"I was compelled to snatch his wallet, in which he had put the certificates, and run for the elevator. Mr. Peck, Mr. Withers and the cashier gave chase, but I beat them out and got away. After I got the stock out of the wallet I sent the book back to your step-father by the elevator boy."

At that moment there was an imperative rap on the door.

"Come in," called Dick.

The door opened and in walked Mr. Peck, Mr. Withers and a policeman.

"Arrest that boy," said Mr. Peck.

"Hold on," cried Dick. "What's your charge?"

"You stole my wallet."

"I merely took it down the elevator in order to get my certificates which you were trying to deprive me of. I sent your wallet back by the elevator boy."

"The certificates are mine, or, rather, they belong to my step-daughter, not to you. You stole them from me and have them in your possession. Arrest him, officer!"

"That is right," said the girl, with some spirit. "The stock belongs to Mr. Merriton. I sold it to him for \$80 a share, and he has paid me a part of the money. He had a right to take the stock from you if you refused to give it to him on my order and bill of sale."

The policeman listened to the argument, and, hearing the girl admit that she had sold the stock, he came to the conclusion that he had no right to interfere.

"Very well," replied Mr. Peck. "I'll see Judge French about the matter."

"Do so, by all means," answered the young broker. "I guess you'll find that I have acted within my rights."

"Where is the \$1,000 you received on account of your stock?" demanded Mr. Peck, turning to his step-daughter.

"It is safe," she replied defiantly.

"Oh, it is," he sneered. "And how about the balance due you? Do you expect that boy to pay you \$15,000?"

"Of course."

"Where do you expect to get \$15,000?" Mr. Peck asked Dick.

"That needn't worry you. I've got the cash. If you or Mr. Withers are interested in my financial standing I refer both of you to Mr. Samuel Littleton, of the Mills Building. He will tell you something that will make your hair curl. Now, I shall consider it a favor if you gentlemen will withdraw and permit me to finish my business with Miss Burnside."

Mr. Peck was about to say something when Mr. Withers plucked him by the sleeve and said he was going to withdraw, and he thought that Mr. Peck had better do the same.

It was evidently against his will that Mr. Peck felt obliged to accept this suggestion, and he departed, after telling Dick that he meant to investigate him.

Dick got out the latest printed list of current bonds, and indicated certain ones that he thought would fill the bill for Miss Burnside.

The result was she gave him an order to purchase bonds to the amount of what he owed her, and then took her departure for home, Dick promising to forward the bonds to her by registered mail in a few days.

CHAPTER XV.

DICK GETS A GRIP ON THE MARKET.

In due time Dick sent the bonds to Miss Burnside and received from her a letter of acknowledgment and thanks.

During the next three months Dick engaged in a couple of deals that raised his capital to about \$150,000.

One day Bob Browning walked into his office about eleven o'clock.

"Taking a day off, Bob?" asked the boy broker, motioning to a seat beside his desk.

"No, I'm bounced."

"Lost your job, eh? What's the trouble?"

"Stayed too long on the top floor."

"What did you do that for?"

"Interested."

"In what?"

"Something I got onto. How much money have you got, Dick?"

"I can raise \$150,000 at a pinch."

"Can you? Then I'll tell you how you can double it easily enough."

"I'd like to hear that," replied Dick, looking interested.

"I shall want a good stake out of it because it's worth it, and I lost my job getting onto it."

"If there's anything in it for me I'll see that you don't get left."

"That's the way to talk, old man. Now, listen."

Bob then told him that the superintendent of the building had sent him that morning for a certain article kept in a small closet on the top floor.

He left the elevator standing open while he went to the closet in question.

While there he heard voices in a room beyond.

Discovering a small hole in the wall, which had been bored for some purpose but not used, he looked through it and saw half a dozen well-dressed men, several of whom he recognized as big brokers.

He soon found out that they were holding a secret meeting in that unoccupied and out-of-the-way room.

The object of the meeting was the formation of a syndicate to secure control of the Hudson River Rapid Transit Company, and then sell out to the United Traction Company of New Jersey, which was after the road.

Bob said he was so interested in what he heard that he neglected to return to his elevator until one of the other men came hunting around after him.

He gave such a poor excuse for his neglect of duty that the superintendent, who had a grouch on that morning, told him that he was discharged.

"Now, Dick, those men are going to hold another meeting in the same room this afternoon at four o'clock, when they expect to have a dozen persons present that will be interested in the scheme," said Bob. "I'll take you up to the top floor and show you the closet. You can hide there and listen

to the full particulars which will be discussed this afternoon. That will put you on the inside of the scheme and you ought to make a raft of money out of it."

"Much obliged, Bob. I'll go with you. If I make a big deal and come out ahead on it I'll give you five per cent. of my winnings."

That afternoon at half-past three Dick was secreted in the closet.

Fifteen minutes later the brokers began to arrive singly and in pairs.

At length there were fourteen present.

Then the door was locked and the proceedings were begun.

Dick heard all that transpired in the room.

He found out that the broker who was engineering the scheme had learned the names of all the people who held good-sized blocks of stock in the H. R. Rapid Transit Co.

Dick made copious notes of all he heard.

He learned that the result would depend largely on the syndicate acquirement of the bulk of 40,000 floating shares which the members expected to pick up about the Street.

Another meeting was arranged for the following afternoon, when those who had signified their willingness to join the pool would come to the room with certified checks for a quarter of a million each.

These checks were to be turned over the broker who had gotten up the scheme, and the final arrangements to set the ball rolling would then be made.

The Manhattan National Bank was named as treasurer for the syndicate.

Dick got away just as the meeting was breaking up, and returned to his office, which he had left in charge of Bob.

After he had thought the matter out he went down to the Mills Building and called on Mr. Littleton.

He gave him the full particulars of the syndicate's proposed operations and asked him if he would go in with him on a project to corner as many of the floating shares as possible.

The lawyer, who had acquired a great respect for the young broker's shrewdness and ability, listened attentively to all the facts of the case, and then surprised Dick by telling him that one of the estates he had control of owned 15,000 shares of the H. R. Rapid Transit Co. stock.

Mr. Littleton pointed to the name on Dick's list of shares that the syndicate counted on acquiring.

"I'll go with you, Merriton, and the estate will figure as a third partner in our deal, for, of course, I shall not sell the stock to any representative of the pool that approaches me with a proposition. I'll put in \$150,000 cash against your amount, and I leave you to work the matter to a successful conclusion."

Dick left the lawyer's office overjoyed, carrying away Mr. Littleton's check for his contribution to their fund.

"I'll start in and buy up the stock at once through a big brokerage house, and with the 15,000 shares of the estate to start with I hope to get a grip on the market," said Dick to himself.

Accordingly, next morning he went to see the head partner of the brokerage firm in question.

"There is my card," he said, after taking his seat. "I represent certain interests that do not wish to be identified with a deal they propose to put through. I am therefore going to put the margin up in cash. I want you to start in at once and buy up as quietly as possible any part of 30,000 shares of H. R. Rapid Transit Co. at the market. I will allow you a leeway of one point, and will deposit with you \$300,000 to cover the transaction."

At three o'clock that day the trader notified Dick by messenger that he had secured 22,000 shares of the stock.

Dick, after figuring up the situation, sent him word to quit buying after he had purchased 3,000 more.

The young broker visited the closet on the top floor of the King Building at four that afternoon, and found out some more valuable points on the matter in hand.

The operations of the syndicate were to begin at once, about half of those interested in the deal taking a hand to push things along.

The head of the pool took charge of buying the floating shares, while the others were told off to see the persons on the list who were likely to part with their stock.

The meeting was adjourned on call.

Next morning Dick's broker secured the remaining 3000 shares, the whole batch costing an average price of 50%, and then the boy lay back on his oars.

CHAPTER XVI.

A HOT TIME IN WALL STREET.

Broker Westlake, who was managing the interests of the syndicate, soon discovered that there was an unexpected scarcity of H. R. Rapid Transit shares on the market.

He was much surprised at this, because three days before he had quietly ascertained that he could buy between 30,000 and 40,000 shares among the brokers.

After he had gathered in 20,000 shares he began to experience great difficulty in finding any more.

So he had to go to the Exchange and bid for the stock.

The result was that by the time he got hold of 10,000 more the price had gone up to 52.

In the meantime the other active participants in the pool had bought in most of the shares that were open to offers.

In this way the syndicate succeeded in getting possession of 95,000 shares.

This amount was within 10,000 of the number held by the people in power, who believed that they controlled the voting power of 30,000 more shares.

As a matter of fact, they did, until the rival syndicate bought the 30,000 out.

When the people who were managing the road woke up to the situation they found out that their control of the line was in jeopardy.

They immediately held a meeting and decided that they must raise funds enough to secure at least 20,100 more shares of stock.

The money was borrowed and brokers were hired to go out and look for the shares.

The members of the rival syndicate, however, were not asleep.

They were scouring around hot-foot after the stock, too.

Fifty thousand shares were still outside the control of the rival factions.

Of these 15,000 shares were known to be held by Lawyer Littleton, who turned down all offers looking to their purchase, even at 65.

What puzzled the interested parties was what had become of the 25,000 shares that had recently vanished from the Street.

Their purchase had been traced to the brokerage house employed by Dick Merriton, but no amount of detective work brought to light the identity of the person for whom they had been bought.

A couple of weeks passed, during which the price of the rapid transit stock had advanced to 70, and each side had secured about 3,000 shares more.

Then the following advertisement appeared in a prominent part of the "Wall Street News":

HUDSON RIVER RAPID TRANSIT STOCK.

For Sale to the Highest Bidder.

A Large Block of H. R. R. T. Co. Stock.

Richard Merriton, Broker.

Room 416 Globe Building.

The morning that the advertisement appeared in the "News" it was read by every trader in the district, and soon after nine o'clock there was a procession of brokers on the way to Dick's little office.

The boy guessed what would happen and was on hand early.

John Barker, Dick's old boss, was the first comer.

He had learned from Broker Withers, at the time of the Peck-Burnside episode, that his former messenger had branched out as a trader, and the fact had greatly astonished him.

He wanted to know something about this block of rapid transit stock, for he was one of the brokers employed by the management to get hold of 20,000 shares.

He hardly got into conversation with Dick before Mr. Withers came in on a similar errand.

On top of them came Mr. Westlake, the head of the rival syndicate.

Then other brokers dropped in until the room was so full that not another man could enter, while the corridor outside filled up with excited traders interested in what was going on.

Everybody within reach of Dick tried to get his ear, and the confusion prevented any business from being transacted.

The crowd outside increased to such proportions that passers-by reported down-stairs that there was trouble up the seventh corridor, and so the superintendent bolted up there.

He inquired the cause of the gathering of brokers on the fringe of the mob.

A couple of wags happened to hear his question and they told him that one of his tenants had committed suicide after shooting his stenographer, and suggested that he had better send for the police.

The superintendent believed the story, and, rushing down-stairs, telephoned to the nearest station the apparent state of things in the Globe Building.

Word was sent to the Central Office on Mulberry street, and the news bureau, as a matter of course, heard about it.

In five minutes the intelligence was 'phoned to every paper in the city, and a small army of reporters were soon on the way to Wall Street to learn the particulars.

One enterprising yellow journal hurried an extra through its presses and the newsboys were soon yelling: "Murder and suicide in Wall Street. A broker shoots his stenographer and then kills himself."

In the meantime Dick sprang upon his desk and addressed his visitors.

He said he had 40,000 shares of rapid transit stock for sale and asked for a bid on it.

Mr. Barker said he'd take 20,000 at 72.

Mr. Westlake said he'd give 73 for 30,000 shares.

Barker raised his bid to 73½, and Westlake saw him one-half point better.

The bidding became spirited till Westlake offered 75.

As nobody believed that the stock was worth much more than 55 or 60 at the outside, great excitement ensued in the crowd.

To add to the confusion Broker Barker lost his temper and wanted to assault Mr. Westlake when the latter bid 75.

Somebody on the outskirts of the crowd yelled 76 for the whole block, but Dick couldn't see who it was.

About this time some of the reporters arrived and began asking questions.

Four policemen also appeared at the same time.

The superintendent, who returned up-stairs soon after sending for the cops, had discovered by this time that he had been hoaxed, and he tried to square himself with the police.

Dick, after receiving the last bid, said that he could not sell less than the 40,000 shares.

If Mr. Westlake would take the shares at 75 he could have them, unless Mr. Barker bid a higher figure.

Barker snatched up Dick's desk 'phone and communicated with his principals.

The reply he got caused him to throw up the sponge, and then Westlake agreed to take the 40,000 shares.

Dick gave him an order on Mr. Littleton for 15,000 and an order on his brokerage firm for the 25,000—both to be delivered C. O. D.

The profit of the deal amounted to \$900,000, of which amount Dick collared one-third.

It was some little while before matters could be straightened out, but for two hours at least there was a hot time in Wall Street, and the brokers didn't get over talking about it, nor of Richard Merriton, who had engineered the big deal in the rapid transit stock, for a week.

On top of it all news came to the Curb that the Mohawk Central mine had developed a fabulously rich vein of gold ore, and there was excitement to burn that afternoon in Broad street, the price going up to \$1.50 a share.

It subsequently went to \$3, at which price Dick sold his 5,000 shares.

As soon as the Hudson River Rapid Transit Company stock had been paid for Dick handed Bob Browning \$15,000, which was five percent of his profits.

From that day Dick jumped into prominence as a clever young broker, and he had to hire a suite of rooms lower down in the building, and a force of clerks, to accommodate his rapidly-increasing business.

A few months later he asked Nelile Grant to marry him, and she consented.

The happy event, however, has not yet come off, but is a certainty of the near future, as soon as Dick has made the million he is aiming at.

Although he is doing a prosperous business to-day in the Globe Building, he says the greatest time of his life was when he had A Grip on the Market.

Next week's issue will contain "WATCHING HIS CHANCE; OR, FROM FERRY BOY TO CAPTAIN."

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE

CURRENT NEWS

An exposition of guns, ammunition, motor trucks, trailmobiles, cycles, boats and camp equipment and supplies, including foodstuffs, will be one of the sections of the preparedness bazaar, to be held in the Grand Central Palace in New York city, Dec. 14 to 21 under the auspices of American patriotic and relief societies. Motion pictures will be shown of Army, Navy and National Guard maneuvers and patriotic preparedness and historical films. A convention or conference on military and industrial preparedness will also be held.

Jerome J. Hayes, a farmer of Sutter County, was in Marysville, Cal., recently on business and purchased a ten-cent plug of chewing tobacco. Hayes took a big bite off the plug and his teeth came in contact with a very hard substance. He investigated and discovered a solitaire diamond in the center of the chew of tobacco. The diamond is said to be valued at \$100. It is presumed that some fair Southern maid working in the tobacco factory accidentally lost the diamond setting from her ring.

Government agents reached Nashville lately with Jazen Haddock, an aged and respected citizen of Linden, Tenn., whom they claim is "the king of the Tennessee Wildcatters," or moonshiners. Haddock was arrested, the officers said, as he finished leading a prayer in the Linden Church, of which he is a pillar. For forty-two years, according to the Government's agents, he has been one of the most respected members of the community. And for forty years, they charge, he has been at the head of one of the biggest moonshine distilleries in the moonshine belt.

John Summers, a seventeen-year-old bellboy in a hotel in Ann Arbor, Mich., says he has \$500 in bank, the result of saving his tips for a year. Following a prank, which threatened to result in expulsion from school in Brooklyn, he boarded a freight train and started West to make his fortune. He received \$10 a month and his board, and his tips amount to from \$10 to \$20 a week. With his first savings he bought a typewriter, which he rents to traveling men. He also receives a commission from a local tailor for work brought in. Summers expects to go into business for himself in another year, he says.

Efforts to rid the farm of H. M. Tilford, millionaire oil man, in Monroe Village, near New City, Rockland County, N. Y., of destructive muskrats, resulted in the arrest of Superintendent Leslie W. Pyle of the estate, on a charge of violating the game

laws. The muskrats, by burrowing tunnels, were undermining buildings, and one of Mr. Tilford's valuable horses was injured by thrusting its legs into one of the burrows. So the employees got out firearms and set traps for the muskrats. Mr. Pyle was asked by Police Justice Gregory of Monroe in his home: "How many did you trap?" When Pyle replied "Two," the Magistrate concluded: "Twenty-five dollars apiece." Pyle paid the fine.

Church people at Bryan's Cross Roads, Del., listened faithfully for the church bell for prayer meeting one night recently, and, failing to hear it, went their various ways. In the meantime the Rev. Mr. Williams was on hand for the first prayer meeting after the summer vacation. No one attended, and after he had waited for some time he went home without the meeting. Investigation disclosed the fact that some one had wrapped the church bell with cloths, and while the sexton, old and deaf, had pulled the rope with his accustomed power, the bell gave forth no sound, and no one knew that there was a meeting.

The London Times reports that there is a great decrease in the prison population of Great Britain since the war began. The latest report of the Commissioners of Police and of the directors of convict prisons states that 114,283 were in restraint last year, but only 64,160 this. According to this report three main causes are responsible for the decrease: (1) The enlistment of many habitual petty offenders; (2) the restrictive orders issued by the liquor control and those made by the justices and by military authorities, and (3) the great demand for labor, rendering employment easy and well paid and resulting in ability to pay fines. This accords with American experience during our Civil War.

The Orkney Islands, says Pearson's Magazine, do not really belong to Great Britain in the sense that they were ever ceded by treaty or acquired by conquest. They were simply transferred by Denmark to Scotland in 1468, in pledge for the payment of the dowry of the Princess of Denmark, who was married to James III, King of Scotland. In the deed of transfer, which is still in existence, it is specially mentioned that Denmark shall have the right to redeem them at any future time by paying the original amount of the dowry with interest to date. There is no likelihood, however, that Denmark will ever attempt to exercise her right of redemption, because 60,000 florins, the original amount of the dowry, plus compound interest for 448 years, would amount to perhaps a trillion pounds, and that is a bit more than the islands are worth.

ON TOP

OR

THE BOY WHO GOT THERE

By ED KING

(A SERIAL STORY.)

CHAPTER VIII. (Continued).

"Ah, Mr. Clark," said the lawyer in a business-like way. "I am glad to find you. I have brought a client of mine to see you regarding your Montana land. This is Mr. Johnson Horner."

The tall Westerner bowed with a suave manner. Tiff nodded stiffly. He felt an instinctive aversion to the man.

"Happy to meet Mr. Clark," said Horner affably. "I'm a stranger in the East. Own a ranch up in Montana. Want to buy a few acres adjoining so that I can make a corral. Came East to see the owner, Mr. Moses Fiske, and find that he is dead, and has bequeathed the land to you. I am willing to buy at a fair price."

"I shall only charge a small commission," said Lawyer Reed nonchalantly. "You must regard this immediate appearance of a customer as fortunate."

Tiff was for a moment startled. This quick opportunity to sell his inheritance might have seemed to him a splendid chance but for a strange eagerness in the stranger's manner. Tiff was only a boy, but he was possessed of rare perspicacity in many things.

For a moment he was silent. Tug was perhaps the more astonished one.

"Are you ready to sell?" asked Lawyer Reed.

"I had not given the matter thought," said Tiff confusedly. "I have owned the property only a few hours. In fact, I have never seen it."

"Well," said Johnson Horner, with a slight sneer, "it might be better for you to take a trip out there and see it. I think you will be very ready to sell."

"Perhaps so," said Tiff. "I think I should prefer to see it first."

"Why, that seems foolish," declared Reed. "You would spend a hundred dollars to run out there and back. As I understand the land is worth only about three times that sum."

"The valuation is excessive at that," said Horner, stroking his chin. "It is only valuable to me as a corral."

"Exactly," said the lawyer in a smooth way. "You might own it twenty years, Clark, before getting another chance to sell."

Tiff looked keenly at the two men. For a moment he thought of the sum offered, three hundred dol-

lars. To him, in his present circumstances, it seemed like a princely fortune. All things seemed possible with the sum of three hundred dollars at his disposal.

It looked indeed an easy and logical matter to accept that sum without further trouble or the necessity of visiting the land. Perhaps he might never receive such an offer again. But a sudden recollection came to him.

"Oh," he exclaimed quickly, "I cannot sell it at any price."

Lawyer Reed gave a start, and Horner's face turned dark with angry disappointment.

CHAPTER IX.

OFF FOR THE WEST.

"You can't sell at any price?" exclaimed Horner in a thick voice. "What do you mean?"

"Just what I say," said Tiff quietly. "I have no right to dispose of the property. It was one of the conditions of the deed of gift."

Horner looked at the lawyer, who rubbed his hands briskly and said:

"Oh, that is only a slight technicality. You need not feel bound by that. I can easily break the obligation for you if you wish."

"If you decide at once I will be even more liberal," said Horner. "I will add one hundred dollars to the price. It is not worth it, but I need it badly for a corral."

"Not for ten times that sum," said Tiff firmly. "This property was left me in good faith by a man who had confidence in my honor. I shall not abuse that confidence, even though he is dead."

"See here," said the lawyer impatiently. "It is easy to see what your circumstances are. You are probably penniless. This land is of no value to you whatever, and you can never do anything with it. Now I advise you to set aside your foolish principle and sell."

"That is your advice as a lawyer?" asked Tiff.

"It is!"

"Then I think you are a mighty poor lawyer," he declared. "I cannot accept your advice under any circumstances. Neither will I sell my land or surrender it. I am bound to go to Montana and develop it."

"Good for you, pard!" cried Tug, as he slapped Tiff on the back. "Don't ya sell! Keep it as long as ye can! I'm with ye!"

"You're a fool!" gritted Horner. "I can tell you that you'll be sorry for it. What would a greenhorn like you do out there in Montana?"

"Let the matter rest, Horner," said the wary lawyer. "He will change his mind when he sees the land."

"That he will!" cried the Westerner, accepting the cue. "Go West, young fellow. Go to Montana, and see what you will make out of it. You'll be glad to sell then at a sacrifice."

Lawyer Reed took his client by the arm and pushed him out of the room. He bowed suavely and said:

"We will await your decision, Mr. Clark. I shall expect to hear from you later."

The door closed behind the two visitors. For some moments Tiff and Tug were silent. They were both deeply impressed with the incident.

"Well," said Tug finally, "I never was so glad of anything in my life as that you did not sell that land, Tiff."

"I couldn't sell it," said Tiff. "Didn't the deed specify that?"

"Well, perhaps so. But there isn't one in a hundred who wouldn't break that agreement now that the old man is dead."

"Well, I wouldn't," said Tiff sharply. "If I accept a gift on conditions I mean to respect those conditions every time."

"Good for you, Tiff. I think you're right," declared Tug, "but it's curious why that sharp-eyed duffer got so mad when you wouldn't sell him the land."

"It is evident that he wanted it bad."

"I tell you, Tiff, there's something back of it all. I'm dead onto that old chap, and he's a bad one. He'll try and make trouble for us when we get out to Montana."

The two boys were too excited to sleep much that night. The next morning they were astir early. They at once began their preparations to leave Hilldale.

It was found upon counting their resources that they could pay their railroad fare as far as Buffalo. From there they would have to work their way West as best they could.

"There's one thing about it," said Tug. "The fact that your father was accused of forgery won't be brought up against you in the West, and there'll be a chance for both of us."

Tiff's eyes were gleaming with a light of new hope. The future seemed opening before him in a most encouraging way. The old life was passing, and he was entering upon a new one.

Mrs. Mullins expressed her deep regret that the boys were to leave, and wished them the best of luck in the new enterprise. Tug bought the railroad tickets, and at noon they took the train from Hilldale.

As the boys entered the car and seated themselves Tiff glanced through the window and then clutched Tug's arm with an exclamation.

"Look! There is Horner!"

It was indeed the Western ranch-owner. He looked up, and, seeing the boys in the car window, glared at them in a savage way.

Just then the train started, and as it rolled out of Hilldale, Tiff Clark entered upon a career destined to be as strange and exciting as any that ever fell to the lot of a youth of his age.

The next morning early the train rolled into Buffalo. The boys alighted in the great railroad station and for a moment were buffeted about aimlessly in the crowd.

But Tug caught sight of a lunch counter. The boys patronized this to the extent of a couple of sandwiches. With this frugal meal they fell to a discussion of the next procedure.

Their plan as formulated in Hilldale was to seek work in Buffalo, and as soon as they could earn money enough for railroad fares to go on to Chicago.

Thus they would work their way from one big city to another, until Montana would be reached finally. Just what they would find to do when they got there they had not yet considered. But they believed that there would be a way provided.

The two boys set out at once to find employment. They walked down the business streets and entered stores and shops one after another. They did not seem to meet with any great degree of success.

The merchants, one after another, turned them away. When the hour of noon came, the boys were glad to sit on a bench in a little park and rest. They were footsore and discouraged.

"I say, Tiff," said Tug ruefully, "it doesn't seem to be any easier to find work in Buffalo than in Hilldale."

CHAPTER X.

ON A NEW CAREER.

Tiff Clark knew something of the trotting turf and its habits. There was a track in Belmont where trotting races were often held.

He had seen many of Sailor Jack's type, and understood their nature well. Rough and at times dissipated, the boys who follow the trotters over the circuit are, nevertheless, as a rule, large-hearted and generous to a fault, after the manner of sailors.

It was not a life that could appeal to Tiff, or even to Tug. But on the instant Tiff had recognized the fact that here might be a chance for temporary betterment.

Sailor Jack had heard their conversation, and had seemed to be ready to help them. This disinterested spirit of kindness, despite its source, appealed to Tiff.

(To be continued.)

INTERESTING ARTICLES

NEW COINS ARE HELD UP.

Issue of the new half-dollar designed by Adolph A. Weinman, creator of the new dime, and the new quarter, designed by Herman A. MacNeil, both considered by experts coins of great beauty, was ordered deferred by the Treasury Department until the beginning of 1917.

The extraordinary demand for small coins—cents, nickels and dimes—is taxing the facilities of the mints, and officials believe calls for the new quarter and half dollar would swamp the mints if they were issued now.

PANAMA BIDS FOR BIG LEAGUE CLUBS.

Baseball fans of the Isthmus of Panama are booming that section as an excellent location for one or more training camps for the big league teams. It is claimed that the sanitary conditions of the Canal Zone, under the care and direction of the army and canal officials, are excellent, and that with the dry season extending from December to April the major league baseball players could not find a more satisfactory location for rounding into shape for their pennant battles.

Baseball is exceedingly popular, and the teams would be sure of good gates at any exhibition games that might be staged during their stay in the Canal Zone.

CAN OF MONEY FOUND.

Three small boys, whose aggregate age is twenty years, playing near San Francisco's new City and County Hospital, unearthed the "end of the rainbow" in the tangible form of a tomato can stuffed with real money.

Five thousand dollars in \$5 notes—Federal Reserve bills of the issue of 1914—the boys pulled forth and then began an onslaught upon neighboring candy stores. They did not count the money, but exchanged sheafs of the bills for bags of candy.

In all they passed out \$3,000 for fifty cents' worth of sweets before they were observed by a police officer, who took the remaining \$2,000 in charge.

In the opinion of the police the money was buried by a thief. The money will be returned to the boys if it is not claimed and identified.

BREEDING CATTLE ON MILLION-ACRE FARM

The Consolidated Land Company of Jacksonville, Fla., the largest independent landowners in the State of Florida, have entered in the cattle raising and breeding on an extensive scale. The company has purchased 35,000 head of cattle to stock a 1,000,000-acre tract of land which it owns in southern Florida.

Until recently this land was exploited for its timber and naval stores. W. F. Coachman, vice-president of the company, in an interview with The Manufacturers' Records, said:

"The price paid for the cattle to stock our land was something over \$500,000, and we expect to increase our herds with blooded bulls, in which way we will soon have a hardy, high-grade strain of cattle that will bring a good price in the Northern and Middle Western markets."

The cattle were purchased from Parker Bros., of Arcadia, Fla.

RUMANIA A GREAT GRANARY.

As far back as 1900 Rumania ranged third among the grain-producing nations of the world; and though several countries have since passed it, its annual contributions to the world's supply of food have steadily increased, says The Argonaut. Its average exports of corn during 1911, 1912 and 1913 were second only to those of Argentina; in wheat exports it stood sixth among the world's nations, and in oats exports fifth. This is accomplished with a total area somewhat less than that of the State of Arkansas. Rumania also has enormously rich oil wells, operated to a considerable extent by the American Standard Oil Company.

STUDENTS EARN \$155,976 IN YEAR.

In the past year 718 Columbia students earned \$155,976, mostly in jobs got for them by the Students' Appointment Committee. Since the bureau was organized in 1898 undergraduates have earned \$1,514,334. The earnings ranged up to \$1,800. The occupations included those of chauffeur, artist's model, athletic coach, dancing escort and magazine writer.

Paul C. Holter, Chairman of the committee, urges that no prospective student come to Columbia with less than \$300. In the last year 293 graduates got positions through the committee, as against 169 the year before, and 113 reported earnings of \$109,536.

The P. A. S. Club of the School of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University of No. 346 West Fifty-seventh street, announced that it has taken over the summer care of the several thousand deep-sea fishermen of Labrador and their families at Indian Harbor, Spotted Islands and Battle Harbor. There are hospital accommodations, but the people need clothing and a place for social recreation and education, and the club wants funds for a clubhouse, doctor's residence and storeroom.

Any clothing sent to the club at No. 346 West Fifty-seventh street, marked "For Labrador," will be distributed with care next summer. In addition, \$500 is needed for running expenses for one season.

GOOD AS WHEAT

OR

THE BOY WHO WAS ALL RIGHT

By GASTON GARNE

(A SERIAL STORY.)

CHAPTER I.

THE BOY WHO WAS ALL RIGHT.

Late in the afternoon of a pleasant day in June a bright-faced, manly-looking young fellow, perhaps nineteen years of age, was walking along a lonely mountain trail in Southern New Mexico.

The youth in question had blue-gray eyes, a firm chin, curly hair and was brown as a berry.

He was dressed in strong, serviceable clothing, with a heavy pair of shoes, suitable for walking over the rough trails in the mountains, and on his head was a cap, set well back on his curls.

Under his arm was a violin case.

The youth was whistling softly as he walked along, and he seemed to be happy, even though alone, amid the wilds.

The trail wound and twisted this way and that, and suddenly, on rounding a bend, where a large boulder jutted out in the way, the youth found himself confronted by three masked men, in the hand of each being a cocked and leveled revolver.

"Halt!" cried one of the masked men sternly. "Another step and you die!"

The youth stopped and emitted a whistle of surprise.

"Phew!" he said. "But this is a surprise party!"

"Ha, ha, ha! I guess you are right, youngster. But come, what is your name?"

"Bob Hardy?"

"Where are you bound for?"

"Silverton."

"Got any money?"

"Ten cents. Want it?"

The youth ran his thumb and forefinger into his vest pocket, as though to bring forth the dime, and there was such a whimsical look on his face that the masked men laughed.

"Say, you're all right, youngster," said the spokesman.

"Yes, I'm all right. I'm as good as wheat any way you take me."

The masked men stared. Evidently the young traveler was one who had a good deal of confidence in himself.

"You're a cool one."

"Especially in the winter time."

The leader of the trio of masked men made a gesture.

"That'll do," he said. "What have you in that box?"

"A violin."

"What do you expect to do with a violin down here in this country? Dig with it?"

"No, play it, of course."

"What good will that do you?"

"Lots. I make my living that way."

"I don't understand how you do it."

"Easy enough. You make your living by holding up travelers with your revolvers. Well, I hold people up with my violin. I play it and then take up a collection, see?"

"Yes, I see. But I shouldn't think you would be able to make much of a living that way."

"Oh, I haven't starved to death yet."

"That is evident. By the way, do you know anyone in Silverton?"

"No."

"Entire stranger there, eh?"

"Yes."

"Have you got a home?"

The youth shook his head.

"Nary home," he said, and there was a sad intonation to his voice.

"You travel around and play the fiddle for a living, eh?"

"Yes."

"You go first one place, then another. All places are alike to you, I suppose?"

"Yes, only of course I like a place where I make a good thing out of my music better than a place where I get a water-haul."

"Naturally. But I suppose you don't make a great deal anywhere."

"No. I manage to carry my money without much trouble. Don't have to have a pack-horse."

"I suppose not. But you would like to make good money, wouldn't you?"

"Sure. It's good money or none with me. No bad money in mine, thank you."

"I mean you would like to make a good deal of money easily?"

"I should say so, providing——"

"Well?"

"I can make it honestly."

The men laughed hoarsely in unison.

"Hear that!" from the leader.

"He's a good boy, hain't he!" from one of the others.

"Reg'lar Sunday school teacher! Haw, haw, haw!" from the third.

"Money secured any other way than honestly won't do any good," said Bob Hardy.

"Bosh!" sneered the leader. "But say, kid, I've got a good proposition to make to you."

"Go ahead with the proposition," coolly.

"I will. But first, we are toll-gatherers—road agents, you know."

The youth nodded.

"Yes, I know," he said.

"We hold up stages and travelers."

"Exactly—like you have done with me."

"That's it. But you understand that we could do much better if we had advance knowledge of when gold is to be sent out of Silverton by stage. We miss lots by not having this information, see?"

"Yes. That's too bad, isn't it?" drawled the young traveler.

"It is. And now for the proposition: If you will go down into Silverton and act as a spy for us, and let us know when the express company is going to make a shipment, we will make it worth your while. You shall have a share of the winnings, understand?"

The keen eyes of the young traveler flashed.

"Say, do I look like that?" he asked scornfully.

"Like what?"

"Like I would do such work as that."

"Well, why not? There's money in it."

"Not for me."

"You won't do it?"

"Not on your life!"

"You're a fool!"

"You're another!"

A growl of anger escaped the lips of the leader of the trio of ruffians.

"Say, kid, don't get sassy," he said warningly.

"I'm not. But I usually say about what I think."

"People who do that don't live long in this part of the country."

"Oh, I'm not scared."

"You are either brave or else you're a fool, that's a fact."

"Well, I may be a fool, but I don't believe it."

"I do. No one but a fool would throw away such a chance to make money, eh, boys?"

"Thet's right!"

"Shore thing!"

"Well, I'd rather earn my money playing the violin."

"You could do both. You can go into Silverton and play your fiddle and earn money, and then, by letting us know when shipments of gold are coming out, you could earn a lot more."

"Please excuse me."

"You refuse, then?"

"I do."

The three masked men glared at the young magician a few moments in silence. He met their gaze nonchalantly, and it was plain that he was not worried, or at least, he did not seem to be.

"I've a good mind to put a bullet through you," hissed the leader of the gang.

"That would be throwing away ammunition," coolly. "It would do you no good."

"You make me tired."

"Do I?"

"Yes."

"Well, I can chase away that tired feeling. Just wait a moment."

The young man opened his case and drew forth a violin and bow.

"What are you going to do?" the masked men asked.

"Going to play some for you. They say that 'music hath power to soothe the savage breast,' you know, and I'm going to try it on you fellows."

Then the young fellow placed the violin under his chin, drew the bow across the strings, and began playing as not one of his auditors had ever heard anyone play before.

They listened first with curiosity and then with undoubted pleasure.

So interested were they, so carried away by the wonderful playing, that they lowered their revolvers and stared, spellbound.

When the music ceased, they gave utterance to long-drawn-out sighs.

"How do you like it?" grinned Bob Hardy.

"Et's all right!" from one.

"Thet beats ennythin' I ever heard!" from another.

"You certainly are all right, Bob Hardy!" declared the leader.

"Yes, I know it. I'm as good as wheat, no matter how you take me."

CHAPTER II.

HOLDING UP HOLDERS-UP.

"Play sumthin' else," requested one of the other masked men.

Bob Hardy again placed the violin under his chin and played.

Truth to tell, the young musician was a master of the instrument, and his playing was something wonderful.

His hearers, rude ruffians though they were, listened intently and with evident delight, and when he had finished they drew long breaths.

"Fine!"

"You bet et is!"

"You know how to draw the bow, young fellow!"

(To be continued.)

TIMELY TOPICS

TWO RABBITS COST \$120.

Two rabbits on which Joseph and Albert Argen of Northvale were making a meal in Palisades, Rockland County, N. Y., cost the brothers \$60 each when arraigned before Police Justice Oswald Bauer in Sparkill.

Game Warden Knapp found the defendants roasting one of the rabbits and skinning the other. They had no hunting license.

KILL WHITE-FACED IBIS.

A party of hunters were near Stafford, Kan., some weeks ago, when a long-legged bird, which looked like a crane and flew like a duck suddenly rose and started toward Oklahoma.

Six guns spoke at the same time. The bird gave up the Southern trip. The men did not know what they had killed. They guessed everything from a mudhen to a wild turkey.

George Stansfield made a secret trip to Lawrence and conferred with some of the professors. They labeled the kill a White Faced Glossy Ibis, a species of waterfowl, very rare in Kansas. The coloring is very delicate and changes continually. It is one of the snipe family but is unfit for food.

U. S. MAY BUILD OWN SHIPS.

In connection with the pending awards to successful bidders on the first ships in the new naval building programme, it is said the Navy Department may seek an additional appropriation to equip navy yards for capital ship building, and proceed with the construction of the programme itself if a satisfactory agreement cannot be reached with private bidders. The department already has \$6,000,000 available for the purpose.

The department has had under consideration the construction of at least ten ships at the Philadelphia Navy Yard. Because it is near a center of labor and the structural steel district, that yard might become the navy's greatest building yard should the Government undertake a wholesale construction campaign.

MAN FIGHTS JELLYFISH.

G. H. Wilson was sent to the Cottage Hospital, Santa Barbara, Cal., in a critical condition recently. He had a life and death struggle with a huge jellyfish. Four hundred feet from shore, off Serena, Wilson was suddenly attacked.

He saw before him what he later said looked like a great sheet of butter and eggs. Suddenly the strips of yellow and white began to separate from the mass and extend toward him. He turned to swim out of reach when the creature threw its ten-

tacles about him and the mad fight was on. In the struggle Wilson broke the mass into fragments, but reached the shore exhausted, and his face and shoulders stinging as though from scalds.

At the hospital it was said that the patient would recover. His pain at times was so intense that morphine had to be administered. His shoulders and face resemble one mass of poison oak burns.

SHIP SWARMING WITH STOWAWAYS.

Within three days from the time the Spanish liner Montserrat, which arrived the other night, sailed from Cadiz, seventeen stowaways, all young Spaniards, were discovered.

Four were pulled out of lifeboats before the Spanish coast was out of sight. The next morning another was discovered who had stowed himself away in a spare oven in the galley. The smell of cooking proved too much for him and he gave himself up. Two were dragged out of ventilators. The following night five more appeared on deck.

The next morning the ship's officers decided that they would make a systematic search before changing the manifest again and a stowaway hunt was organized. It resulted in five more being found.

The Montserrat is en route to Vera Cruz, and one of the stowaways determined to go there. The other sixteen chose to be put ashore here and apply for admission to the United States. They were taken to Ellis Island.

PLAYS VIOLIN AND PIANO AT SAME TIME.

In addition to directing the political destiny of Moscow, Ohio, Mayor Harry L. Suter is the town's one-man orchestra. He has devised an apparatus which makes it possible for him to play the piano and violin at the same time. It takes both of Mayor Suter's hands, as well as his elbows, feet and eyes to keep the two instruments going in the same musical time, but the results are worthy of his efforts, when one considers that he is an orchestra all by himself.

When the two instruments are under the spell of the mayor, says Popular Science Monthly, the right hand plays the solo part while the bass part of the piano is operated by the left foot coming in contact with a series of pedals similar to those of an organ. The violin bow is held on a small standard which moves along a groove. A double vise holds the violin, and the part through which Mayor Suter passes his left arm controls the violin, so that the proper string will rest against the bow. The bow is controlled by the right foot, while the fingers of the left hand press the strings. The elbow operates the loud pedal.

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Good Current News Articles

Russian troops near Sarny, southeast of Pinsk, have brought down a large Zeppelin airship. The crew of sixteen was captured. With the crew were taken two machine guns, three other guns and 600 pounds of bombs.

John Magginni was escorting a woman friend down a local street in Belgrade, Mont., when a Northern Pacific switch engine struck him and cut one of his legs in two. He will sue the railway company for \$35 damages. The damaged leg was wooden.

When a dog playfully jumped at John Helfrich at New Mahoning, Pa., the other day, it accidentally struck the trigger of his shotgun, which was discharged. The charge entered his shoulder, and he is in a hospital. The accident happened while he was preparing to go hunting. Helfrich is in a serious condition.

Physicians at the Emergency Hospital, Oakland, Cal., were puzzled over the ailment of a man who was found by the Alameda police recently, standing on the street in a complete state of rigidity, with the exception of a pair of blinking eyes. The police sent the man to the Emergency Hospital. He stood all night perfectly rigid. When pricked by pins the man showed no activity.

The shingle industry has been hard hit recently by legislation in various localities, which bars this roofing from the fire limits. In consequence, efforts have been made to arrive at some method of treating the shingle to reduce the fire risk and to restore it to its old-time popularity. Some tests were recently made at the University of Iowa, which seem to indicate that the desired goal has been arrived at. Arthur Brend of Badger, Iowa, formerly a student

at the university, has compounded a solution which was under test. A piece of wood one-half inch thick was saturated with it, and after being immersed in running water for forty-eight hours, was dried and submitted to the action of the flame from a Bunsen burner. After an hour the wood was unaffected except for a slight charring at the point of contact. The temperature of the flame was between 700 and 1000 degrees F., a much higher temperature than would be experienced in a conflagration. Mercury salts which have been used for the purpose are so costly as to make their use almost prohibitive, and zinc chloride washes out after exposure to the weather; but the new solution is said to have none of these disadvantages.

Grins and Chuckles

The customer—Do you think you can make a really good photograph of me? The artist—Well, sir, I'm afraid I must answer you in the negative.

Scene (a boarding-house)—Wife—Why do you always sit at the piano, David? You know you can't play a note. David—Neither can any one else, while I am here.

Sis—What are you fishing in this stream for, Billy? Billy—Why, I want to get a fish like father caught here last year. It grows a couple of inches every time he talks about it.

"Oh, dear!" sighed small Harry. "I wish I was a clock." "Why do you wish that, Harry?" asked his mother. "'Cause I wouldn't have to wash my hands and face, then," explained the little fellow.

Manager—Did the "star" arouse the audience? Agent—I never saw the equal! Manager—What did they do? Agent—Rose in their seats as one man and threw the movable furniture at him.

Towne—So Dumley married a college woman. My! it must be fierce for him to be tied to a woman who knows so much that he doesn't know. Browne—Oh, that doesn't hurt him so much as the fact that she knows "how" much he doesn't know.

He—Why did you keep harping all through the play on that woman who keeps drumming the same tune over and over in your apartment house? Why didn't you forget it and enjoy the performance? She—I didn't want to. The woman I was talking about sat right in front and heard everything I said.

Tess—Yes; Mr. Sloman asked me for a kiss. He said I could surely see how much he loved me and that I ought to do it. Jess—And what did you say? Tess—I said I couldn't see it in that light, and the silly fellow didn't have sense enough to turn the light down.

BOUND TO BE A SAILOR

By D. W. Stevens

What induced me to go to sea I can but dimly remember. It is so many years ago, and my first voyage was also my last.

Probably it was a somewhat lively imagination fostered by a course of reading, beginning with Robinson Crusoe, thence meandering through various shades of yellow-covered literature, and winding up rather abruptly with Captain Kidd, which latter volume my highly indignant father snatched from my hand just as I had reached a most thrilling episode, and cremated before my very eyes.

However, the mischief was done. I was dispatched to college, but after a couple of years' stay there was ignominiously expelled for conspiring against the faculty, inciting sedition and rebellion among my fellow-students, and setting up a rival government of which I was the chief, and, as the first executive act of my short reign, condemning my worthy professor of Greek to death at the block.

I being thus sent home in disgrace, my father began to despair of ever making of me, his only child, an honorable member of society, and successor in the tape and measurement business, in which he had accumulated a fortune.

As a last desperate resort our family physician, who, by the way, was a horeopathist, advised him to send me to sea and in search of pirates—on the well-known principle of curing like by like, and I may as well here remark that the remedy was a most effectual one.

However, I was at that time in blissful ignorance of the reason of the wise physician's counsel, and my delight can be imagined when one morning my father informed me that he had secured for me the appointment of midshipman in the schooner Nancy Bell, which was to set sail the next day for the South Sea Islands on a general trading cruise, capturing whatever pirates they came across on the voyage.

Obtaining from my father a sum which I deemed sufficient for my purpose, I, not without some difficulty, purchased an outrig, including revolver, cutlasses, short swords, etc.; and thus fully equipped in a manner to strike terror, not only to the soul of the most valiant pirate of the sea, but of everybody else, who must have looked upon me as some escaped lunatic, I proudly strode the deck of the vessel that was to be the scene of my glorious exploits.

But why linger over the fond, tearful parting from my parents; the unalloyed bliss of the first day's voyage out; the utter misery of the succeeding two weeks, when I lay in my hammock, groaning and writhing in all the agonies of seasickness; the surprise that awaited me to find, on my recovery, all my gay garments, my pistols, weapons, powder and ammunition gone, and in their stead a pair of coarse, white trousers, a blue navy shirt, a frieze jacket, leather belt and tarpaulin, and a pair of cowhide

boots, in all of which I was obliged to array myself; the disgust that overspread my countenance when informed by the captain, into whose presence I was summoned, that we were not going in search of pirates, and, in fact, would keep out of their way as much as possible; that my duty would chiefly consist in scrubbing the decks, wait on him personally, and assist the sailors generally, to the best of my ability, and that the slightest show of disobedience and insubordination on my part would be met by summary and condign punishment.

Weeks rolled by. We reached our place of destination, completed our traffics, and with a valuable cargo of gold, spices and ebony wood on board, set sail for home.

I do not know exactly in what part of the South Pacific we were, when one night I was aroused from my sleep in the hammock by the cry of: "Pirates, pirates!"

"At last!" cried I, hastily scrambling into my clothes and rushing on deck.

When I reached the deck, I found the pirate vessel lashed tightly to ours, while my captain was standing on board the strange craft, holding an apparently friendly conversation with a gigantic-looking swarthy-faced, heavily-bearded chap, whom I at once put down to be a pirate chief himself.

The consultation was over in a few minutes, and then the captain returned with the, to me, startling information that the pirate had agreed to accept one-fourth of our cargo as a condition of letting us continue our voyage unmolested.

This was more than blood and flesh could stand.

I leaped on the pirate's deck, and snatching a cutlass from the hands of a brawny negro standing near, I flashed it before the chieftain's eyes, and cried:

"Come on, you shag-eared villain, you! I'm Young America, I am, and I'll——"

Before I could finish the sentence I felt myself raised in the air by the muscular negro, and unceremoniously pitched into the sea.

I opened my mouth to scream for help, but only swallowed enough sea water to suffocate me.

When I awoke to my senses I found myself lying on a couch of soft furs spread on the sandy ground of a little cave.

My eyes were fixed on the blue vault of the sky, and the billowy waves of the ocean which gently rippled on the sloping beach close by.

A slight sound caused me to turn my head, and there I saw a maiden clad in an Oriental costume as gorgeous and magnificent as she was lovely and beautiful. I now also observed a matronly-looking, middle-aged woman, evidently my bewitching companion's attendant, standing at some distance off.

"Senor is awake, Gracioso Dios!" murmured the fair unknown in pure Spanish. My college education had given me a perfect mastery of the language.

"Will senorita please tell me where I am, and how I came here?" asked I, faintly.

"Senor must not excite himself by talking," said the old lady. "The Princess Inez and myself were walking on the beach here two days ago, and found your body lying on the shore, where it had been cast by the waves. We brought you to the cave, and restored you to life. That is all."

She seemed unwilling that her mistress should remain longer in my presence now that I was awake, and touched her wrist to draw her away.

"Do not go yet," cried I, raising myself to a sitting posture. "First let me thank the princess and you for your kindness to me. And pardon me, I feel hungry and thirsty."

"Here, senor," eagerly interrupted the princess, uncovering a dainty repast and a bottle of wine which she had brought with her. "You may eat and drink. Brigitta will bring you food and wine every day, but you must not leave this cave. If my father or Sancho were to see you, they would kill you."

With these words she somewhat hastily departed with her maid, leaving me alone, with food for my body and reflection for my thoughts.

The day passed quickly enough in such pleasing occupation, but when the morrow came, contrary to my expectations, it brought no Brigitta, with a second instalment of food and wine, and news from her whom I already denominated my heart's queen.

This time the hours passed slowly and restlessly by, and when, on the following morning, I was again left alone, I could endure the hunger and suspense no longer! Had my fair rescuer snatched me from a watery grave only to leave me to die a slow death by starvation, or did they not dare to approach my place of concealment?

The latter thought, instead of prompting caution, made me the more eager to sally forth and learn the worst, in spite of all danger, and I left the cave and set out for a number of cottages which I beheld some hundred yards inland.

I was still rather weak and pale, and my enforced abstinence from nourishment made me somewhat tremulous in the legs; but I resolutely pushed forward until I reached what I found to be a veritable pirates' village.

There was no mistaking the character of the place.

A building more ambitious-looking than the rest attracted my attention, and I advanced to the vine-covered porch and boldly rapped at the closed window.

Suddenly, the wooden shutter was slightly opened, and a fairy-like hand, which I instantly recognized as belonging to my princess, was extended to me.

"Flee, senor," I heard Inez whisper; "my father has locked me and Brigitta in the house here."

"Never, Inez," cried I, impulsively.

Again she put out her hand and touched my brow as if to push me away, and at that moment, with terrible cries, came rushing toward me, saber in hand, the very pirate chief and negro whom I had already once before encountered.

"Diablos!" cried the chief. "So you are the dog whom my daughter cares for in the cave. The brat

who dared to defy me to my own face! Ha, ha! Sancho," he added, turning with a grim laugh to the negro, "this youngster is the same chap you threw overboard. He wasn't born to be drowned—ha, ha!"

"Yah, yah," grinned the black fiend. "We hang him—yah!"

Resistance on my part was useless, and, seized by the brawny arms of the negro, I was raised bodily from the ground, and, with Inez's terrible shriek ringing in my ears, carried into the next hut.

With that I was left alone, and it may be imagined that my thoughts were not of a very pleasant order. I wished myself back again to New York, and would gladly have resigned the rainbow-tinted air-castle I had reared since I had seen and known Inez, and taken up any position behind my father's counter. However, wishing did not help matters any, and as soon as daylight waned, Sancho came to fetch me to my funeral pyre.

The bonds were removed from my feet but not from my hands, and I was marched out into an open space where there were about two score men and women. I was received with shouts and execrations by the assembled throng, and at once led to a pile of wood and brushes which had been erected in the center of the plain.

Sancho took up a flaming torch and was about to apply it to the combustible material by which I was surrounded when the throng was parted and Inez, wild and breathless, came rushing up to me, and throwing her arms around my neck, exclaimed:

"Now, Sancho, light the pile. We will perish together!"

"On them; give them Hail Columbia!"

The command rang out clear and distinct from the surrounding bushes, and the next instant, with many a shout and hurrah, there dashed toward us no others but a detachment of the crew of the Nancy Bell, led by my own captain.

The pirates were taken at a decided disadvantage.

Among the killed were Sancho, the negro, and the pirate chief, the latter confessing before his death that Inez was not his daughter, but an American girl, whom he had taken from a captured vessel when she was a child.

When Inez, Brigitta and myself, together with a good part of the pirate's treasure were safely on board the Nancy Bell, the captain told me that his compromise with the pirate had been but a ruse to disarm the latter's suspicions, and that he had followed him to the island to be able to get the pirates at a disadvantage, in which, as we have seen, he was successful.

It is needless to add that my opinion of the captain underwent a radical change, and ever afterward I was never weary of lauding his bravery and sagacity.

First Co-Ed—Is he interesting? Second Co-Ed—No! All he does is sit at the end of the sofa and talk!

FROM ALL POINTS

BULL DERAILS LOCOMOTIVE.

Jumbo, a ferocious bull, matched his strength against that of a locomotive pulling a freight train up a grade near Mason, Tenn., the other day. In a field beside the tracks the engine lies on its side, only a few feet from Jumbo's dead body. In a hospital at Mason, John Burns, fireman, is seriously injured. The locomotive was hurled down a steep embankment when it collided with the bull's head-long charge, but the animal continued so active that the train crew shot him.

THE GLOBE IS NOT OVERCROWDED.

There are on this globe about 1,500,000,000 inhabitants. Most of us, who lack the sense of proportion, at the mention of this big number are apt to speak of the "overpopulation" of the world. Yet if we spare a few moments' thought, we shall better know what this represents.

There is in my study room a geographic globe about 15 inches in diameter, writes L. H. Blakeland in *Scribner's Magazine*. On that sphere there is marked a little spot about the size of the point of a pencil—at any rate so small as to make it impossible to write the initials of its name, Lake Champlain, upon it. Yet whenever Lake Champlain freezes over there is good standing for every one of all the inhabitants of the earth, and then this lake would be considerably less crowded than some of the busy streets of New York.

Indeed, strange as it may sound, every one, young and old, would find about one square yard to stand upon. Nay, more, if the very young and the very old would please to stand aside on the shores of the lake, the remainder of the total inhabitants of the world could arrange a skating party where they would be less crowding than is seen on a busy winter day on that skating pond in New York's Central Park.

A PEG-LEGGED BURGLAR.

Conviction of Walter Jones, a one-legged burglar, in the criminal court of Birmingham, Ala., brought out an unusual incident of house-breaking.

The story of the burglary and capture, as told by the evidence, showed that Jones, in his effort to rob the home of Mr. and Mrs. E. P. Vennom, an old couple of the suburbs, crawled under the bed and waited for them to retire.

The burglar himself fell asleep, and his snoring aroused Mrs. Vennom, who undertook to light a lamp, which exploded. This awoke the burglar, who threatened Mrs. Vennom with death if she gave the alarm.

Just then Mr. Vennom awoke and grappled with the burglar, who leaped out of a window. The burglar had left his wooden leg under the bed.

By following single foot-tracks the police pursued the peg-legged robber to his refuge. With the assistance of a pal, Jones made another wooden leg, with which he went to his shanty in the woods. Suddenly the police arrived and Jones dived through the rear window.

In the back yard the mud was deep, and the wooden leg sank so far in the mire it stuck firm. Jones hobbled on desperately without it, but was overtaken while hopping on one foot.

Both the original and second wooden legs were exhibited as evidence.

INDIANS THE BEST CANOE BUILDERS.

The North American Indians have brought the canoe to its highest state of perfection. With the most frail material, birch bark, they construct a craft so light that it may be carried by one man, and yet so strong and buoyant that it will carry a very considerable load. A framework of light but tough wood is covered with sheets of birch bark, which are sewed together, the seams being waterproofed with resinous gums. They are propelled by means of a single-bladed paddle, which is dipped on one side only (a slight twist correcting the tendency to swerve from a straight line), or alternately on either side. The use of the birch bark canoe by the Indians of the United States is rapidly becoming a thing of the past, asserts the *Seattle Post Intelligencer*, but the art of building them has been preserved by their construction as a pleasure craft.

A form of canoe of recent invention is used solely for pleasure. About 1865 John Macgregor, impelled by a love of adventure, sought recreation on the rivers and fjords of Europe as well as on the waters of Egypt and Palestine. He developed his model from the Esquimau kayak, and evolved a clinker-built craft of cedar, about 14 feet long and 2 feet in beam, entirely decked over with the exception of a "well" in which the canoeist sits. This is propelled by means of a double-bladed paddle, but a short mast enables the carrying of a sail. In a canoe of this type, which he named the *Rob Roy*, Macgregor cruised on the Danube, the Jordan, the Nile, the Seine and on Norwegian fjords. From this early model other forms have been evolved, notably the *Nautilus* and *Shadow* types. Watertight compartments insure permanent buoyancy. Centerboards counteract leeway when under sail or a wind. The interior space is so arranged as to provide a sleeping place for the cruiser.

ARTICLES OF ALL KINDS

BUCK ATTACKS CATTLE.

A four-pronged buck has been annoying cattle on farms in Frankstown Township, Pa. It was first seen at the Bagshaw farm, where it mingled with the herd in the barnyard. When the kine objected to this intrusion, the antlered monarch gored several of them silently and disappeared in the mountains. A day later the buck joined the cattle in a field of the Eli Moore farm and, after an encounter with them, was driven off with difficulty. He did not seem to be in the least timid.

PREACHER BAKES HUGE CAKE.

One of the attractive exhibits at the Door County Fair, at Sturgeon Bay, Wis., was a great cake, baked by the Rev. James Deans, Congregational pastor here. He was a baker in his youth. The cake is about ten feet high and contains forty pounds of sugar. The upper layers, of which there are three, are supported by silver pillars. The lower layer is seven and a half feet around. Baskets, wreaths, chains, scrolls and all sorts of ornaments are about it. The Young Men's Sunday School Class was in charge of the exhibit.

CHAMPION MELON EATER.

Thomas S. Vanaszek, world's champion, is in training. Vanaszek, a senior in the College of Letters and Science at the University of California, says that next summer he'll either break his own record or bust something trying. He holds the title of world's champion cantaloupe eater. Last summer he worked in Imperial Valley. Before his tent he put a marker, and every time he ate a cantaloupe he added a notch. When he got through there were 789 notches, an average of twenty-six a day. Now he's practising on oranges and cup custard, just to keep his hand in.

DOG SAVES OLD MAN.

A pointer dog probably saved the life of William Hunt, eighty years old, who was lost in the Weymouth Woods, Mass., for thirty hours.

Mr. Hunt had started to walk five miles through the woods to the home of his daughter-in-law. He lost the trail, and after struggling through the thick underbrush for several hours, fell exhausted in a clearing.

Dr. Louis Pease of Weymouth, was tramping through the woods the following day with his pointer dog, when the animal suddenly darted through the underbrush, barking excitedly. Dr. Pease's efforts to call the animal to him failed, and upon going forward to investigate, he found the animal standing beside Mr. Hunt.

The aged man was helped to his home, where it is thought he would suffer no permanent illness from his experience.

SANDSTONE FOOT DUG UP.

A curiosity held by the Anderson Cottonwood Irrigation District, Redding, Cal., is a human foot in sandstone that was dug up from the bottom of the main canal at the outlet of the tunnel at the intake. The foot is evidently that of a woman. The outline is perfect, even down to the toes, the ball of the foot and the delicate lines of the instep.

The specimen was dug up at a depth of twenty feet, or below the glacial deposit of boulders and gravel that was made thousands of years ago, as geologists measure time.

The explanation of the find is that, years and years ago, when the flat east of Redding was mud, an Indian maiden walked barefoot across the plain. Her feet made a well-defined imprint, that was filled up later in some flood drift by sand. The sand in time turned to sandstone and made the rare specimen now held by the irrigation district.

VALUE OF BIRDS UNTOLD.

The magnitude and importance of the wild-fowl of the United States is shown in these plain statements of facts given out recently by the Department of Agriculture:

"The State of Maine estimates the annual income from its game resources at \$13,000,000, of which about 5 per cent., or \$650,000, can safely be allotted to the returns from migratory wild fowl.

"Oregon values the annual returns from its game resources at \$5,000,000. Of this amount about \$1,000,000 may be attributed to migratory wild fowl.

"It is evident that the actual annual returns from this source in the several States reach a very large amount, and the value of this resource to the nation amounts to hundreds of millions of dollars.

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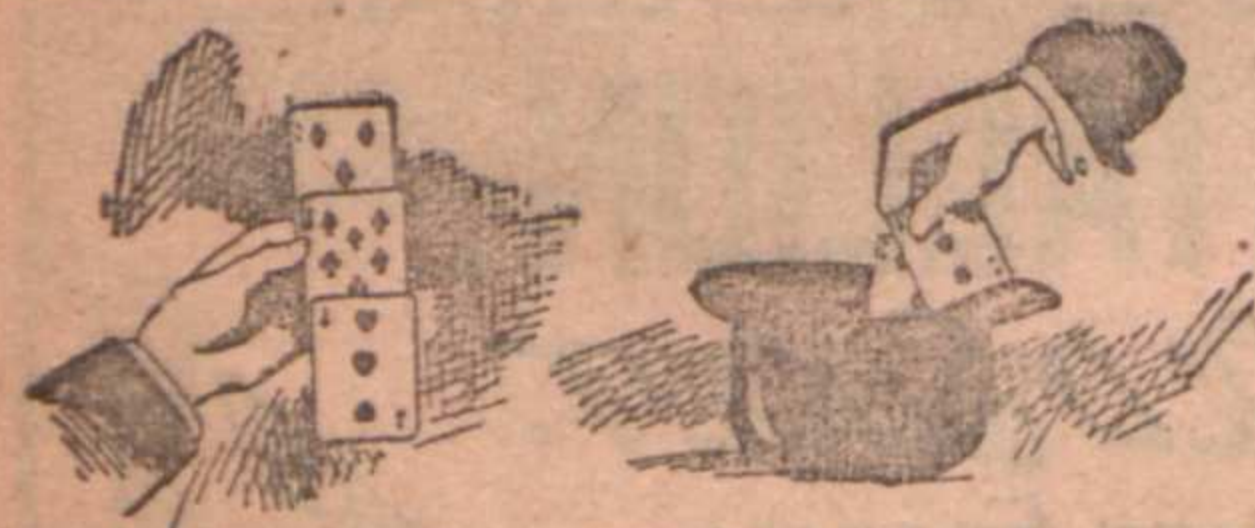
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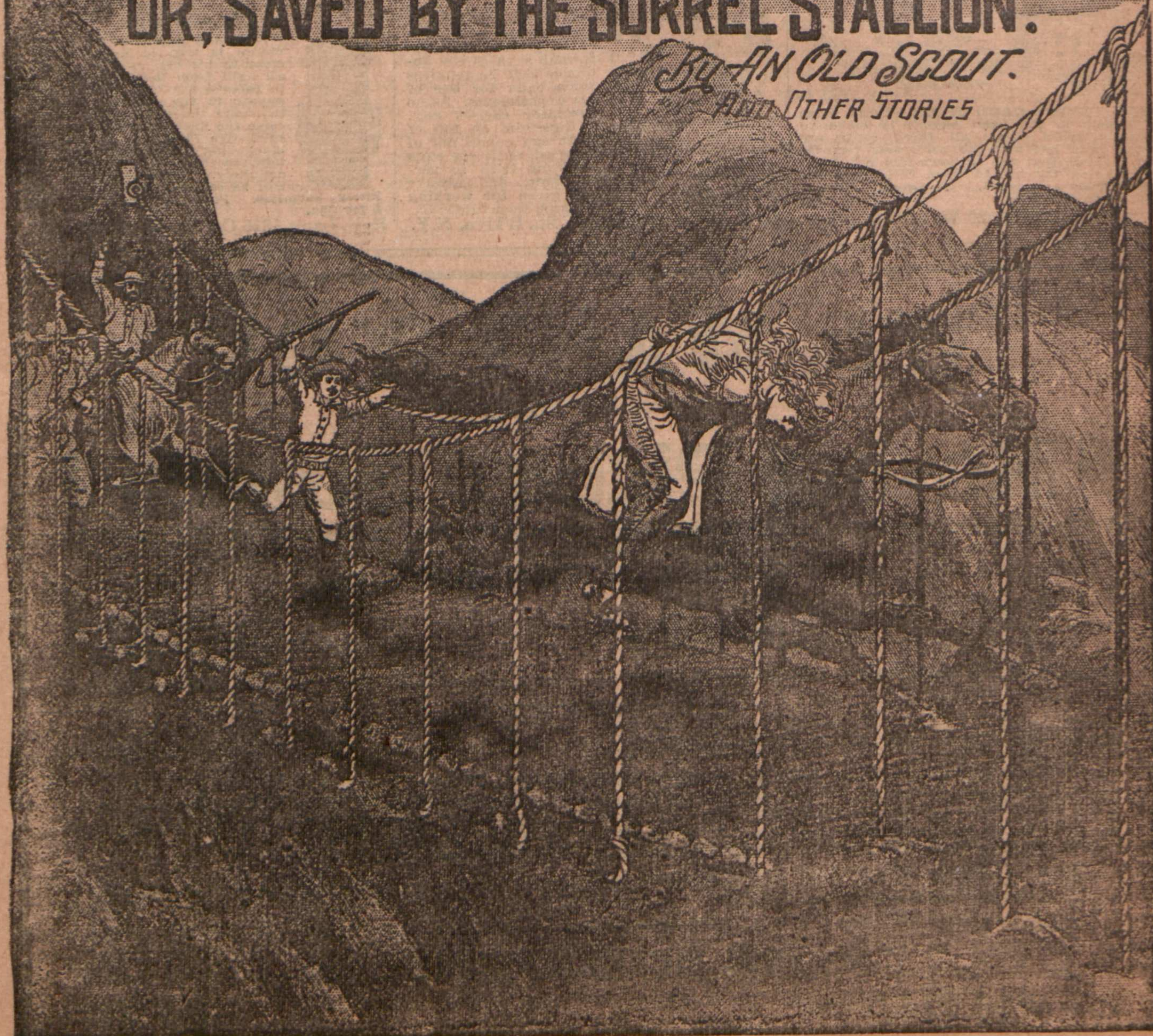
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